

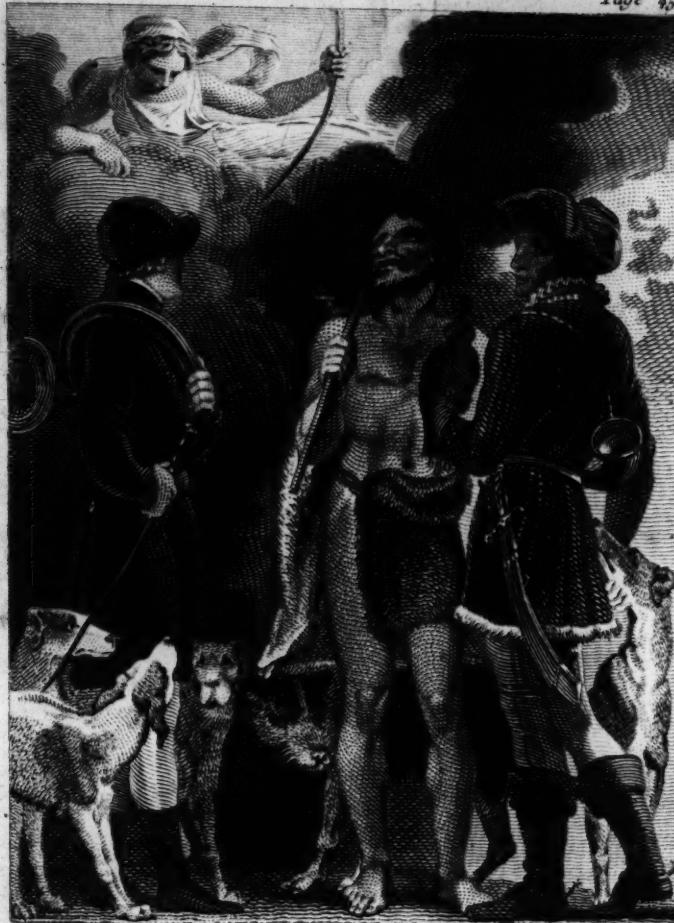
THE
C H A S E,

A
POEM.



1742





Drawn by T. Stothard R.A.

Engraved by J. Neagle

Nature, in her Productions slow, aspires
By just Degrees to reach Perfection's Height.

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THE
C H A S E,
A
POEM.

BY WILLIAM SOMERVILLE, Esq.

A NEW EDITION.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED

A CRITICAL ESSAY,

BY J. AIKIN, M. D.

L O N D O N :

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A
CRITICAL ESSAY
ON
SOMERVILLE's POEM
OF
THE CHASE.

THE true idea of a didactic poem being once established—that its real purpose is not to *teach*, but to *amuse* under the semblance of teaching—it will remain to be considered what kinds of subjects afford the happiest themes for these compositions. The two great requisites appear to be, interest and variety. Without the former, the work will prove insipid; without the latter, tedious. The first point is secured by choosing a topic which is capable of

rousing the passions, or, at least, of agitating the mind by lively emotions. The second is attained by frequent changes of scenery, and a due mixture of images derived from the senses and the understanding.

The subject of the poem before us will, it is presumed, be generally thought to possess both these advantages in no inconsiderable degree. As far as instinctive propensities can be attributed to man, it may be asserted that he has ever, in almost all the different states of society in which he has been placed, exhibited a native passion for the chase; and he may, perhaps, be denominated a *hunting animal*, with as much propriety as the dog or the panther. Like the former of these, he receives

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delight from the chase itself, independently of the acquisition ; for it is found, that no degree of plenty obtained by the labours of others, or by exertions of a different kind, has been able to subdue that ardour by which many are impelled to incur hardships, fatigues, and even dangers, in pursuit of an object, which would be extremely trivial, were it not for the gratification experienced in the very pursuit. What but the chase (or war, which is an image of it), can urge the rich man to forego the pleasures of luxurious indolence, and submit to privations and bodily sufferings which for a time put him upon a level with the lowest of his train? —while the poor man is equally prone to encounter hazards of all kinds for the sake of a participation in the same animating delights. M. de SAUSSURE,

4 CRITICAL ESSAY ON

in his travels among the Alps, giving an account of the dangerous sport of chamois-hunting, relates the following circumstance. "I knew a young man, of an engaging figure and countenance, just married to a charming woman, who, on conversing upon this subject, said to me, My grandfather died in the chase, so did my father, and so persuaded am I that the same will be my destiny, that I call this sacking which I take with me on my hunting expeditions, my winding-sheet, because I am certain I shall have no other. And yet, Sir, were you to offer to make my fortune on condition of renouncing chamois-hunting, I would not comply." Within two years the poor man's prediction was verified. M. de SAUSSURE, in accounting for this extraordinary passion, which could not be excited by any

reasonable hopes of profit, justly attributes its power to the alternations of hope and fear, and the perpetual agitation of the mind from these strong emotions, which actuate the hunter as they do the gamester, the warrior, and the navigator.

With respect to the *variety* afforded by the chase as a subject for the poet, it is considerable, not only in direct description, but in digressive and incidental matter. The speculatist, who is inclined to take a wide range, may descant on various topics of philosophy and natural history connected with it; such as the separate powers of instinct and education in animals, the opposite laws of preservation and destruction in the economy of nature, the influence of climate and season, the moral effects of

the passion for the chase, and the like. If to these be added, historical digressions relative to the manners of different stages of society and periods of the world with respect to this object, intermixed, perhaps, with a portion of mythology, which might without force be introduced, it will appear that a poem on hunting may possess compass and elevation enough to prove interesting even to those who are not practically attached to the sports of the field.

The poem of Mr. SOMERVILLE, however, is much less a philosophical than it is a descriptive one. The writer was a real, not a speculative, sportsman ; and it was not till fixed to his elbow-chair by infirmity, that he thought of writing on the chase, instead of following it. Classically edu-

cated, but, as it appears, with a mind not remarkably opened by habits of investigation, or elevated by images of the fancy, he has produced a piece, the principal excellence of which consists in pictures drawn from the life, and animated by the warm genuine feelings of the painter. The language, the sentiments, the incidents, all display perfect acquaintance with the scenes described ; and in hurrying from narration to narration, with little interposition of digressive and fanciful matter, he seems rather borne directly onward by his ardour for a favourite subject, than bounded by incapacity for excursive flights. By his manner of writing he has certainly attained that which should be the principal aim of every writer, whether in verse or prose—he has deeply interested his reader in his

descriptions, and has placed every thing before the imagination in the strong light and vivid colours of reality. But the merit of the work is not confined to truth and spirit alone. Its plan and arrangement are formed with competent skill ; variety and contrast are studied with success ; and the attempt, at least, to break the uniformity of description by the intermixture of sentiment and reflection, has not been neglected.

To proceed to a more particular examination of the poem—After a dedicatory address to the Prince of WALES, in strains sufficiently adulatory, the writer gives a slight sketch of the origin of hunting in times of barbarism, and of its introduction in a more polished form into this island. The brevity with which he passes over these topics, certainly

not unfertile of poetical ideas, proves his impatience to quit speculation and conjecture for the realities of description. A short but spirited passage on the praises of Britain, next introduces the proposed subject of the work, declared in an address to the youth of hereditary landed property ; and the poet feelingly alludes to his own situation, prevented by years and infirmities from joining in the pleasures of the chase, but still recalling with delight his former triumphs, and pleased to point out to others the way to like renown.

The proper business of the book commences with a description of the dog-kennel, in which he soon exhibits his talent for accurate and lively painting, by representations of the pack issuing forth in the

morning, oppressed by the fervour of noon, bathing in the cool stream, sporting with each other, and engaging in broils and combats. A particular and beautiful description of the hare-hound or beagle succeeds, which is followed by a sketch of other kinds, adapted for different departments of the chase. This introduces a digression concerning the blood-hounds which were formerly kept on the Scottish border, and employed in detecting robbers. The picture of one of these at work in pursuing by the scent and at last detecting the felon, is highly animated. Hence the poet is naturally led to some philosophical discussion on the nature and cause of those effluvia which exercise the admirable sagacity of the canine species; and he concludes the book with shewing the effects of atmospherical

changes on the scenting power of dogs, and with some liberal sentiments concerning the advantages of a cultured mind in enabling a person to enjoy at home those days which are unfit for the diversions of the field.

The second book opens with a philosophical subject, which the poet, had he been so disposed, might not unsuitably have pursued to a greater extent. It is the power of instinct in modifying the actions and habits of the brute creation. He contents himself, however, with instancing its effects in two animals, the roebuck and the hare. In speaking of the latter, he slides into a fuller description of its manners and mode of life, preparatory to the first grand picture in his work, that of a hare-hunt. A

pleasing view of autumn, and a spirited sketch of the dawn of day, are the immediate preludes. The impatience of the fiery courser, and the ecstasy of the pack let loose from their kennel, and ready to begin the chase, are finely painted. The ensuing description receives peculiar value from its circumstantial minuteness; which, displayed in natural and energetic language, intermixed with bursts of genuine feeling, gives wonderful force and truth to the whole scenery. If any one compares the finished picture of a chase by SOMERVILLE, with the draughts by THOMSON, formed upon general ideas, and interspersed with sentiment and reflection, he will be sensible of the great difference between writing upon a topic merely as belonging to a general subject, and indulging in a favourite theme, which dwells on the mind in the vivid colours of

memory and affection. It would be scarce possible even in prose to describe the hunting of the hare with more exactness than is here done ; yet the language throughout is sufficiently elevated, and some of the passages are truly poetical. Such is that, describing the *music of the chase*, and its fascinating effect upon all the hearers ; well exemplifying the universality of that passion which urges men to partake of the hunter's pastime. Though there are touches in the representation which may call forth the emotions of pity in a feeling mind, yet the poet has judiciously refrained from enforcing them by moral sentiment and reflection, which would act in contradiction to his purpose. The effect of the opposite conduct of THOMSON, in converting a joyous scene into a melancholy one, is obvious.

This humble though animated English hunting-piece is succeeded by a contrast, representing the chase in its utmost pomp and magnificence, with respect both to the persons engaged in it, and the objects. It is an eastern picture, copied from the relations of travellers ; and to which, therefore, the writer has brought nothing but his acquired skill in poetical painting, with the enthusiasm inspired by a favourite subject. It is truly a grand and noble piece, abounding in rich images and striking incidents, and wrought with great force and distinctness of colouring. Its character being, as it were, historical, there is little scope for strokes of the fancy ; yet the effect of the martial music and shouts of the surrounding hunters upon the enclosed wild beasts, is conceived with true poetic imagination ;

tygers fell

Shrink at the noise ; deep in his gloomy den

The lion starts, and morsels yet unchewed

Drop from his trembling jaws.

And the mutual rage of the encircled savages
against each other, with their sudden tameness at
the approach of their human foe, are striking ideas.

If any objection lies against this splendid picture, it
is, that being introduced thus early, it has a ten-
dency to flatten and diminish the subsequent scenes.

We shall see, however, that the poet has made the
best use of his personal knowledge, to throw an inte-
rest, by the force and clearness of circumstance, up-
on the home descriptions he afterwards introduces.

The third book commences with the fox-chase,
a subject which he seems to have laboured more

con amore than any other. It is, indeed, the capital scene of action to the English sportsman; for though the stag is a much nobler object of pursuit, the chase of the fox abounds with greater variety of incident, and is a severer trial to the spirit of the hunters, and the perseverance of the dogs and horses. The brief account of the extirpation of the wolf, a kindred animal, from this island, forms an appropriate introduction. The casting off the hounds, their working upon the scent, the unkennelling of the fox, his breaking away to the open country, and the full cry of the pack, are all highly animated pictures. In the pursuit, somewhat of the ludicrous is intermixed, together with some pathetic incidents, which last appear rather incongruous in a scene which is represented as inspiring “the madness of delight.”

The notice taken of other modes of destroying this noxious animal, introduces a digression, in which are described the methods of taking the lion and the elephant in pitfalls, the curious manner of hunting the leopard by means of a mirror, and a wild-boar chase. All these pictures are copied from other authors, and of course are not enlivened with the spirit and circumstance of the British ones. Yet they afford an agreeable variety; and the draughts of the lion astonished by his fall into the pit, and of the elephant issuing majestically from his covert in the evening, are vigorously conceived.

The other capital picture of this book is that of a stag-hunt in Windsor-forest. Though vastly inferior in magnificence to that of the Indian hunting

before described, it is, however, drawn in a dignified style, and made to partake of the polish and splendour of a court. Such being its character, it is no wonder that the ardour and animation congenial to the chase when partaken of by equals, is somewhat kept down ; and that a kind of awe and respect for the exalted personages who compose the principal figures takes place of the sportsman's rapture. This, too, is the only scene in which ladies are introduced as forming part of the group ; whence gallantry has its share in the sentiments. But, much as we must admire the graceful form of the huntress, the *penfive* lover at her side makes rather an insipid figure. There is, however, considerable variety and interest in the events of the chase ; and much diligence is employed to render

the descriptions full and poetical. It concludes with a compliment to the sovereign on a supposed exertion of mercy in saving the life of the hunted animal; but the occasion is too trivial to justify the pomp of the sentiment.

The fourth book commences with a strain of philosophising, the drift of which it is not easy to discover. If the purpose were, to establish the position, that unless a pack of hounds be recruited with a young brood it will fall to decay, less effort and solemnity would have sufficed: it serves, however, as an introduction, to various didactic topics belonging to his general subject; such as, the mode of rearing a young progeny, the choice of those which are best worth preserving, and the discipline

by which they are to be trained, all which are treated in an interesting manner. The character of the babbling and unsteady hound is well drawn; and the method of curing the propensity to worrying sheep forms a natural and humorous picture. Touching on the diseases of dogs, the poet is led to a particular description of that dreadful malady, canine madness, in which the contrasted figures of melancholy and fury in the animal subject are sketched with great force. In describing the hydrophobia in the human subject he seems not equally successful; and more knowledge of fact would have enabled him to render the draught more striking, without any mixture of fabulous circumstances. All this part of the fourth book would seem more naturally attached to the first,

which treats of introductory matter ; but the writer probably reserved it for this place, in order to break that continuity of hunting-pieces, which might otherwise have proved tiresome. The last picture of this kind is well discriminated from the rest by a change of scene to another element. The chase of the otter, though an animal rather mean and inconsiderable, affords some very lively and amusing description. The view of a rivulet, and the various tribes of fish by which it is peopled, is truly beautiful ; and there are some very picturesque touches in the watery landscape of the otter's retreat. It may be remarked, that though every former chase has contained full and rapturous descriptions of the "gallant chiding," the music of the hound and horn, the poet has been

able in the present to repeat it with circumstances of novelty, that give it striking effect.

The poem concludes with an imitation of VIRGIL's well-known praise of a rural life, in the second Georgic. The application, however, is less happy than in the original; for the poem of SOMERVILLE being professedly addressed to the heirs of great families, as those best qualified to enjoy the pleasures of the chase, there exists no real opposition between them, and the possessors of opulence and splendour. It is true, he has, as much as possible, given it the turn of a contrast between town and country—between the ambitious courtier and the sportsman; but since, in fact, the fox-hunter in the country is often a politician in town,

and hunting-matches are usually associated with party, the distinction is rather apparent than real. Further, the sports of the hunter are noisy, tumultuous, attended with parade, and generally ending in conviviality ; they ill accord, therefore, with the calm, retired, reflective disposition of the lover of nature and votary of philosophy. If these tastes were united in SOMERVILLE, it is certain that they are rarely found to be so in his brother-sportsmen. In reality, it is not among them that the admirers even of a poem on the chase are to be looked for. This work will chiefly be read by the readers of English poetry in general ; and its chief merit will be to have afforded them a source of pleasing novelty ;—to have placed in their view a set of lively pictures, which will strike with the appearance of

truth even those who are not practical judges of their subjects.

From what has been above remarked, the poetical character of SOMERVILLE will be easily deduced. He is strictly and almost solely a *descriptive* poet; and his talent lies in delineating actual scenes with fidelity and spirit, adorning them with the beauties of fiction, but leaving them to act upon the imagination by their own force, without aid from the creations of fancy. In classical allusion he is not deficient, but it is of the more common kind; and little occurs in his writings that indicates a mind inspired by that exalted enthusiasm which denotes the genius of superior rank. His versification is generally correct and well varied, and evidently

flows from a nice and practised ear. His language is well suited to his subjects, rising and sinking with them, and free from that stiffness and affectation so commonly attendant upon blank verse. It more resembles that of ARMSTRONG, than of THOMSON or AKENSIDE. Some of his other poems shew him to have had a strong perception of the ludicrous; and in this, too, traits of humour are discernible. On the whole, SOMERVILLE occupies a respectable place among our native poets; and his CHASE is probably the best performance upon that topic which any country has produced.

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P R E F A C E.

THE old and infirm have at least this privilege, that they can recal to their minds those scenes of joy in which they once delighted, and ruminate over their past pleasures, with a satisfaction almost equal to the first enjoyment. For those ideas, to which any agreeable sensation is annexed, are easily excited; as leaving behind the most strong and permanent impressions. The amusements of our youth are the boast and comfort of our declining years. The ancients carried this notion even yet further, and supposed their heroes in the Elysian Fields were fond

of the very same diversions they exercised on earth.
Death itself could not wean them from the accustomed sports and gaieties of life.

Pars in gramineis exercent membra palæstris :

Contendunt ludo, et fulvâ luçtantur arenâ :

Pars pedibus plaudunt choreas, et carmina dicunt.

Arma procul currusque virûm miratur inanes.

Stant terrâ defixæ hastæ, paffimque soluti

Per campos pascuntur equi. Quæ gratia currûm

Armorumque fuit vivis, quæ cura nitentes

Pascere equos, eadem sequitur tellure repôstos.

VIRG. Æneid. VI.

Part on the grassy cirque their pliant limbs

In wrestling exercise, or on the sands

Struggling dispute the prize. Part lead the ring,

Or swell the chorus with alternate lays.

The chief their arms admires, their empty cars,
Their lances fix'd in earth. Th' unharnes'd steeds
Graze unrestrain'd ; horses, and cars, and arms,
All the same fond desires, and pleasing cares,
Still haunt their shades, and after death survive.

I hope therefore I may be indulged (even by the
more grave and censorious part of mankind) if at
my leisure hours I run over, in my elbow-chair,
some of those chases, which were once the delight
of a more vigorous age. - It is an entertaining, and
(as I conceive) a very innocent amusement. The
result of these rambling imaginations will be found
in the following poem ; which if equally diverting
to my readers, as to myself, I shall have gained my
end. I have intermixed the preceptive parts with
so many descriptions and digressions in the Georgic

manner, that I hope they will not be tedious. I am sure they are very necessary to be well understood by any gentleman, who would enjoy this noble sport in full perfection. In this at least I may comfort myself, that I cannot trespass upon their patience more than MARKHAM, BLOME, and the other prose writers upon this subject.

It is most certain, that hunting was the exercise of the greatest heroes in antiquity. By this they formed themselves for war; and their exploits against wild beasts were a prelude to their other victories. XENOPHON says, that almost all the ancient heroes, NESTOR, THESEUS, CASTOR, POLLUX, ULYSSES, DIOMEDES, ACHILLES, &c. were *Μαθῆται Κυνηγεστῶν*, disciples of hunting; being

taught carefully that art, as what would be highly serviceable to them in military discipline. **XEN.** **CYNEGETIC.** And **PLINY** observes, those who were designed for great captains, were first taught *certare cum fugacibus feris cursu, cum audacibus robo, cum callidis astu*: to contest with the swiftest wild beasts, in speed; with the boldest, in strength; with the most cunning, in craft and subtilty.

PLIN. PANEGYR. And the Roman emperors, in those monuments they erected to transmit their actions to future ages, made no scruple to join the glories of the chase to their most celebrated triumphs. Neither were their poets wanting to do justice to this heroic exercise. Beside that of **OPPIAN** in Greek, we have several poems in Latin upon hunting. **GRATIUS** was contemporary with **OVID**; as appears by this verse,

Aptaque venanti GRATIUS arma dabit.

Lib. IV. PONT.

GRATIUS shall arm the huntsman for the chase.
But of his works only some fragments remain.
There are many others of more modern date.
Among these NEMESIANUS, who seems very much
superior to GRATIUS, though of a more degenerate
age. But only a fragment of his first book is pre-
served. We might indeed have expected to have
seen it treated more at large by VIRGIL in his third
Georgic, since it is expressly part of his subject.
But he has favoured us only with ten verses; and
what he says of dogs, relates wholly to greyhounds
and mastiffs.

Veloces Spartæ catulos, acremque Molossum.

GEOR. III.

The greyhound swift, and mastiff's furious breed.

And he directs us to feed them with butter-milk.

Pasce sero pingui. He has, it is true, touched upon the chase in the fourth and seventh books of the *Aeneid*. But it is evident, that the art of hunting is very different now, from what it was in his days, and very much altered and improved in these latter ages. It does not appear to me that the ancients had any notion of pursuing wild beasts by the scent only, with a regular and well-disciplined pack of hounds; and therefore they must have passed for poachers amongst our modern sportsmen. The muster-roll given us by OVID, in his story of ACTÆON, is of all sorts of dogs, and of all countries. And the description of the ancient hunting, as we find it in the antiquities of Pere de MONTFAUCON taken from the Sepulchre of

the **NASOS**, and the **Arch of CONSTANTINE**, has not the least trace of the manner now in use.

Whenever the ancients mention dogs following by the scent, they mean no more than finding out the game by the nose of one single dog. This was as much as they knew of the *odora canum vis.* Thus **NEMESIANUS** says,

Odorato noscunt vestigia prato,

Atque etiam leporum secreta cubilia monstrant.

They challenge on the mead the recent stains,
And trail the hare unto her secret form.

OPPIAN has a long description of these dogs in his first book, from verse 479 to 526. And here, though he seems to describe the hunting of the hare by the scent through many turnings and

windings ; yet he really says no more than that one of those hounds, which he calls *iχνεύληγες*, finds out the game. For he follows the scent no further than the hare's form ; from whence, after he has started her, he pursues her by sight. I am indebted for these two last remarks to a reverend and very learned gentleman, whose judgment in the *belles lettres* nobody disputes, and whose approbation gave me the assurance to publish this poem.

OPPIAN also observes, that the best sort of these finders were brought from Britain ; this island having always been famous (as it is at this day) for the best breed of hounds, for persons the best skilled in the art of hunting, and for horses the most enduring to follow the chase. It is therefore

strange that none of our poets have yet thought it worth their while to treat of this subject; which is, without doubt, very noble in itself, and very well adapted to receive the most beautiful turns of poetry. Perhaps our poets have no great genius for hunting. Yet I hope, my brethren of the couples, by encouraging this first, but imperfect essay, will shew the world they have at least some taste for poetry.

The ancients esteemed hunting, not only as a manly and warlike exercise, but as highly conducive to health. The famous **GALEN** recommends it above all others, as not only exercising the body, but giving delight and entertainment to the mind. And he calls the inventors of this art wise

men, and well-skilled in human nature. *Lib. de
parva pilæ exercitio.*

The gentlemen, who are fond of a jingle at the close of every verse, and think no poem truly musical but what is in rhyme, will here find themselves disappointed. If they be pleased to read over the short preface before the PARADISE LOST, Mr. SMITH's Poem in memory of his friend, Mr. JOHN PHILIPS, and the Archbishop of CAMBRAY's Letter to Monsieur FONTENELLE, they may probably be of another opinion. For my own part, I shall not be ashamed to follow the example of MILTON, PHILIPS, THOMSON, and all our best tragic writers.

Some few terms of art are dispersed here and there; but such only as are absolutely requisite to explain my subject. I hope in this the critics will excuse me; for I am humbly of opinion, that the affectation, and not the necessary use, is the proper object of their censure.

But I have done. I know the impatience of my brethren, when a fine day, and the concert of the kennel, invite them abroad. I shall therefore leave my reader to such diversion as he may find in the poem itself.

En age, segnes,

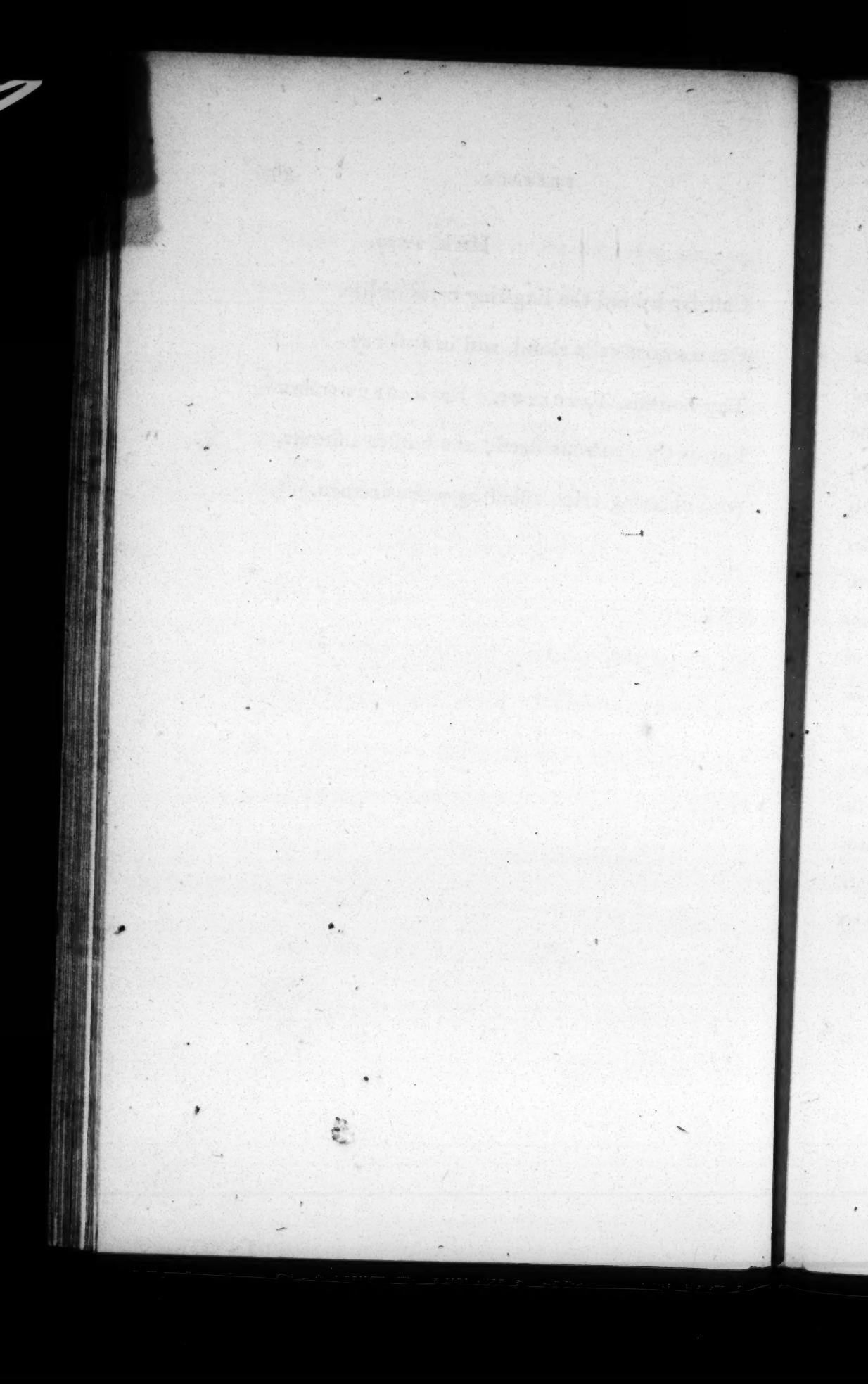
Rumpē moras; vocat ingenti clamore Cithæron;

Taygetique canes, domitrixque Epidaurus equorum;

Et vox affenfū nemorum ingeminata remugit.

VIRG. Georg. III.

Hark, away,
Cast far behind the ling'ring cares of life.
CITHÆRON calls aloud, and in full cry
Thy hounds, **TAYGETUS**. **EPIDAURUS** trains
For us the gen'rous steed ; the hunter's shouts,
And cheering cries, assenting woods return.



THE
FIRST BOOK
OF
THE CHASE.



M E N T.

The subject proposed. Address to his Royal Highness the Prince. The origin of hunting. The rude and unpolished manner of the first hunters. Beasts at first hunted for food and sacrifice. The grant made by God to man of the beasts, &c. The regular manner of hunting first brought into this island by the NORMANS. The best hounds and best horses bred here. The advantage of this exercise to us, as islanders. Address to gentlemen of estates. Situation of the kennel and its several courts. The diversion and employment of hounds in the kennel. The different sorts of hounds for each different chase. Description of a perfect hound. Of sizing and sorting of hounds; the middle-sized hound recommended. Of the large deep-mouthed hound for hunting the stag and otter. Of the lime-hound; their use on the borders of ENGLAND and SCOTLAND. A physical account of scents. Of good and bad scenting days. A short admonition to my brethren of the couples.

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C H A S E.

BOOK I.

TH E C H A S E I sing, Hounds, and their various
breed,

And no less various use. O thou Great Prince!

Whom C A M B R I A 's tow'ring hills proclaim their
lord,

Deign thou to hear my bold, instructive song.

While grateful citizens with pompous shew, 5

Rear the triumphal arch, rich with th' exploits



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THE CHASE.

BOOK I.

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While grateful citizens with pompous shew, 5

Rear the triumphal arch, rich with th' exploits

Of thy illustrious house ; while virgins pave
Thy way with flow'rs, and, as the Royal Youth
Passing they view, admire, and sigh in vain ;
While crowded theatres, too fondly proud 10
Of their exotic minstrels, and shrill pipes,
The price of manhood, hail thee with a song,
And airs soft-warbling ; my hoarse-sounding horn
Invites thee to the chase, the sport of kings ;
Image of war, without its guilt.— The Muse 15
Aloft on wing shall soar, conduct with care
Thy foaming courser o'er the steepy rock,
Or on the river bank receive thee safe,
Light-bounding o'er the wave, from shore to shore.
Be thou our great protector, gracious Youth ! 20
And if in future times, some envious prince,
Careless of right and guileful, shou'd invade

Thy BRITAIN's commerce, or shou'd strive in vain
To wrest the balance from thy equal hand ;
Thy Hunter-train, in cheerful green array'd, 25
(A band undaunted, and inur'd to toils)
Shall compasf thee around, die at thy feet,
Or hew thy passage thro' th' embattled foe,
And clear thy way to fame; inspir'd by thee
The nobler chase of glory shall pursue 30
Thro' fire, and smoke, and blood, and fields of death.

NATURE, in her productions flow, aspires
By just degrees to reach Perfection's height:
So mimic Art works leisurely, till Time
Improve the piece, or wise Experience give 35
The proper finishing. When NIMROD bold,
That mighty hunter, first made war on beasts,

And stain'd the woodland green with purple dye,
New, and unpolish'd was the huntsman's art ;
No stated rule, his wanton will his guide. 40
With clubs and stones, rude implements of war,
He arm'd his savage bands, a multitude
Untrain'd; of twining osiers form'd, they pitch
Their artless toils, then range the desert hills,
And scour the plains below; the trembling herd 45
Start at th' unusual sound, and clam'rous shout
Unheard before; surpris'd, alas ! to find
Man now their foe, whom erft they deem'd their lord,
But mild and gentle, and by whom as yet 49
Secure they graz'd. Death stretches o'er the plain
Wide-wafting, and grim slaughter red with blood :
Urg'd on by hunger keen, they wound, they kill,
Their rage licentious knows no bound; at last

Incumber'd with their spoils, joyful they bear
Upon their shoulders broad, the bleeding prey. 55
Part on their altars smokes a sacrifice
To that all-gracious Pow'r, whose bounteous hand
Supports his wide creation ; what remains
On living coals they broil, inelegant
Of taste, nor skill'd as yet in nicer arts 60
Of pamper'd luxury. Devotion pure,
And strong necessity, thus first began
The chase of beasts : tho' bloody was the deed,
Yet without guilt. For the green herb alone
Unequal to sustain man's lab'ring race, 65
Now ev'ry moving thing that liv'd on earth
Was granted him for food. So just is Heav'n,
To give us in proportion to our wants.

Or chance or industry in after-times
Some few improvements made, but short as yet 70
Of due perfection. In this isle remote
Our painted ancestors were slow to learn,
To arms devote, of the politer arts
Nor skill'd nor studious; till from NEUSTRIA's coasts
Victorious WILLIAM, to more decent rules 75
Subdu'd our SAXON fathers, taught to speak
The proper dialect, with horn and voice
To cheer the busy hound, whose well-known cry
His list'ning peers approve with joint acclaim.
From him successive huntsmen learn'd to join 80
In bloody social leagues, the multitude
Dispers'd, to size, to sort their various tribes,
To rear, feed, hunt, and discipline the pack.

Hail, happy BRITAIN ! highly favor'd isle,
And Heav'n's peculiar care ! To thee 'tis giv'n 85
To train the sprightly steed, more fleet than those
Begot by winds, or the celestial breed
That bore the great PELIDES thro' the press
Of heroes arm'd, and broke their crowded ranks ;
Which proudly neighing, with the sun begins 90
Cheerful his course ; and ere his beams decline,
Has measur'd half thy surface unfatigu'd.
In thee alone, fair land of liberty !
Is bred the perfect hound, in scent and speed
As yet unrivall'd, while in other climes 95
Their virtue fails, a weak degenerate race.
In vain malignant steams and winter fogs
Load the dull air, and hover round our coasts,
The huntsman ever gay, robust, and bold,

Defies the noxious vapour, and confides 100
In this delightful exercise, to raise
His drooping head and cheer his heart with joy.

Ye vig'rous youths, by smiling Fortune blest
With large demesnes, hereditary wealth,
Heap'd copious by your wise forefathers' care, 105
Hear and attend ! while I the means reveal
T' enjoy those pleasures, for the weak too strong,
Too costly for the poor : to rein the steed
Swift-stretching o'er the plain, to cheer the pack
Op'ning in concerts of harmonious joy, 110
But breathing death. What tho' the gripe severe
Of brazen-fisted Time, and slow disease
Creeping thro' ev'ry vein, and nerve unstrung,
Afflict my shatter'd frame, undaunted still,

Fix'd as the mountain ash, that braves the bolts 115
Of angry Jove ! tho' blasted, yet unfallen ;
Still can my soul in Fancy's mirror view
Deeds glorious once, recall the joyous scene
In all its splendors deck'd, o'er the full bowl
Recount my triumphs past, urge others on 120
With hand and voice, and point the winding way :
Pleas'd with that social sweet garrulity,
The poor disbanded vet'ran's sole delight.

First let the Kennel be the huntsman's care,
Upon some little eminence erect, 125
And fronting to the ruddy dawn ; its courts
On either hand wide op'ning to receive
The sun's all-cheering beams, when mild he shines,
And gilds the mountain tops. For much the pack

(Rous'd from their dark alcoves) delight to stretch,
And bask, in his invigorating ray : 131
Warn'd by the streaming light, and merry lark,
Forth rush the jolly clan ; with tuneful throats
They carol loud, and in grand chorus join'd
Salute the new-born day. For not alone 135
The vegetable world, but men and brutes
Own his reviving influence, and joy
At his approach. Fountain of light ! if chance
Some envious cloud veil thy resplendent brow,
In vain the Muses aid, untouch'd, unstrung, 140
Lies my mute harp, and thy desponding bard
Sits darkly musing o'er th' unfinish'd lay.

Let no CORINTHIAN pillars prop the dome,
A vain expence, on charitable deeds

Better dispos'd, to clothe the tatter'd wretch, 145

Who shrinks beneath the blast, to feed the poor

Pinch'd with afflictive want: For use, not state,

Gracefully plain, let each apartment rise.

O'er all let cleanliness preside, no scraps 149

Bestrew the pavement, and no half-pick'd bones,

To kindle fierce debate, or to disgust

That nicer sense, on which the sportsman's hope,

And all his future triumphs must depend.

Soon as the growling pack with eager joy 154

Have lapp'd their smoking viands, morn or eve,

From the full cistern lead the ductile streams,

To wash thy court well-pav'd, nor spare thy pains,

For much to health will cleanliness avail. 158

Seek'st thou for hounds to climb the rocky steep,

And brush th'entangled covert, whose nice scent

Over greasy fallows, and frequented roads
Can pick the dubious way ? Banish far off
Each noisome stench, let no offensive smell
Invade thy wide inclosure, but admit
The nitrous air, and purifying breeze.

165

Water and shade no less demand thy care :
In a large square th' adjacent field inclose,
There plant in equal ranks the spreading elm,
Or fragrant lime ; most happy thy design,
If at the bottom of thy spacious court,

170

A large canal fed by the crystal brook,
From its transparent bosom shall reflect
Downward thy structure and inverted grove.

Here when the sun's too potent gleams annoy
The crowded kennel, and the drooping pack

175

Restless and faint, loll their unmoisten'd tongues,
And drop their feeble tails ; to cooler shades
Lead forth the panting tribe ; soon shalt thou find
The cordial breeze their fainting hearts revive :
5
Tumultuous soon they plunge into the stream, 180
There lave their reeking sides, with greedy joy
Gulp down the flying wave, this way and that
From shore to shore they swim, while clamour loud
And wild uproar torments the troubled flood :
Then on the sunny bank they roll and stretch 185
70
Their dripping limbs, or else in wanton rings
Coursing around, pursuing and pursu'd,
The merry multitude disporting play.

175
But here with watchful and observant eye
Attend their frolics, which too often end 190

In bloody broils and death. High o'er thy head
Wave thy resounding whip, and with a voice
Fierce-menacing o'er-rule the stern debate,
And quench their kindling rage; for oft in sport
Begun, combat ensues, growling they snarl, 195
Then on their haunches rear'd, rampant they seize
Each other's throats, with teeth and claws in gore
Besmear'd, they wound, they tear, till on the ground
Panting, half dead the conquer'd champion lies:
Then sudden all the base ignoble crowd 200
Loud-clam'ring, seize the helpless worried wretch,
And thirsting for his blood, drag diff'rent ways
His mangled carcase on th' ensanguin'd plain.
O breasts of pity void! t' oppres the weak,
To point your vengeance at the friendless head, 205
And with one mutual cry insult the fall'n!
Emblem too just of man's degen'rate race.

Others apart by native instinct led,
Knowing instructor ! 'mong the ranker grass
Cull each salubrious plant, with bitter juice 210
Concoctive stor'd, and potent to allay
Each vicious ferment. Thus the hand divine
Of Providence, beneficent and kind
To all his creatures, for the brutes prescribes
A ready remedy, and is himself 215
Their great physician. Now grown stiff with age,
And many a painful chafe, the wise old hound
Regardless of the frolic pack, attends
His master's side, or slumbers at his ease 219
Beneath the bending shade ; there many a ring
Runs o'er in dreams ; now on the doubtful foil
Puzzles perplex'd, or doubles intricate
Cautious unfolds, then wing'd with all his speed,

Bounds o'er the lawn to seize his panting prey :
And in imperfect whimp'ring speaks his joy. 225

A diff'rent hound for ev'ry diff'rent chase
Select with judgment ; nor the tim'rous hare
O'ermatch'd destroy, but leave that vile offence
To the mean, murd'rous, coursing crew ; intent
On blood and spoil. Oh blast their hopes, just

Heav'n !

230

And all their painful drudgeries repay
With disappointment and severe remorse.
But husband thou thy pleasures, and give scope
To all her subtle play : by nature led
A thousand shifts she tries ; t' unravel these 235
Th' industrious beagle twists his waving tail,
Thro' all her labyrinths pursues, and rings

Her doleful knell. See there with count'naunce blith,
And with a courtly grin, the fawning hound
Salutes thee cow'ring, his wide op'ning nose 240
Upward he curls, and his large sloe-black eyes
Melt in soft blandishments, and humble joy ;
His glossy skin, or yellow-pied, or blue,
In lights or shades by Nature's pencil drawn,
Reflects the various tints ; his ears and legs 245
Fleckt here and there, in gay enamell'd pride
Rival the speckled pard ; his rush-grown tail
O'er his broad back bends in an ample arch ;
On shoulders clean upright and firm he stands ;
His round cat foot, strait hams and wide-spread thighs,
And his low-dropping chest, confess his speed, 251
His strength, his wind, or on the steepy hill,
Or far-extended plain ; in ev'ry part

So well proportion'd, that the nicer skill

Of PHIDIAS himself can't blame thy choice. 255

Of such compose thy pack. But here a mean

Observe, nor the large hound prefer, of size

Gigantic ; he in the thick-woven covert

Painfully tugs, or in the thorny brake

Torn and embarras'd bleeds : but if too small, 260

The pigmy brood in every furrow swims :

Moil'd in the clogging clay, panting they lag

Behind inglorious ; or else shivering creep

Benumb'd and faint beneath the shelt'ring thorn.

For hounds of middle size, active and strong, 265

Will better answer all thy various ends,

And crown thy pleasing labours with success.

As some brave captain, curious and exact,

By his fix'd standard forms in equal ranks

His gay battalion, as one man they move 270

Step after step, their size the same, their arms

Far gleaming, dart the same united blaze :

Reviewing generals his merit own ;

How regular ! how just ! and all his cares 274

Are well repaid, if mighty GEORGE approve.

So model thou thy pack, if honour touch

Thy gen'rous soul, and the world's just applause.

But above all take heed, nor mix thy hounds

Of diff'rent kinds ; discordant sounds shall grate

Thy ears offended, and a lagging line 280

Of babbling curs disgrace thy broken pack.

But if th' amphibious otter be thy chace,

Or stately stag, that o'er the woodland reigns ;

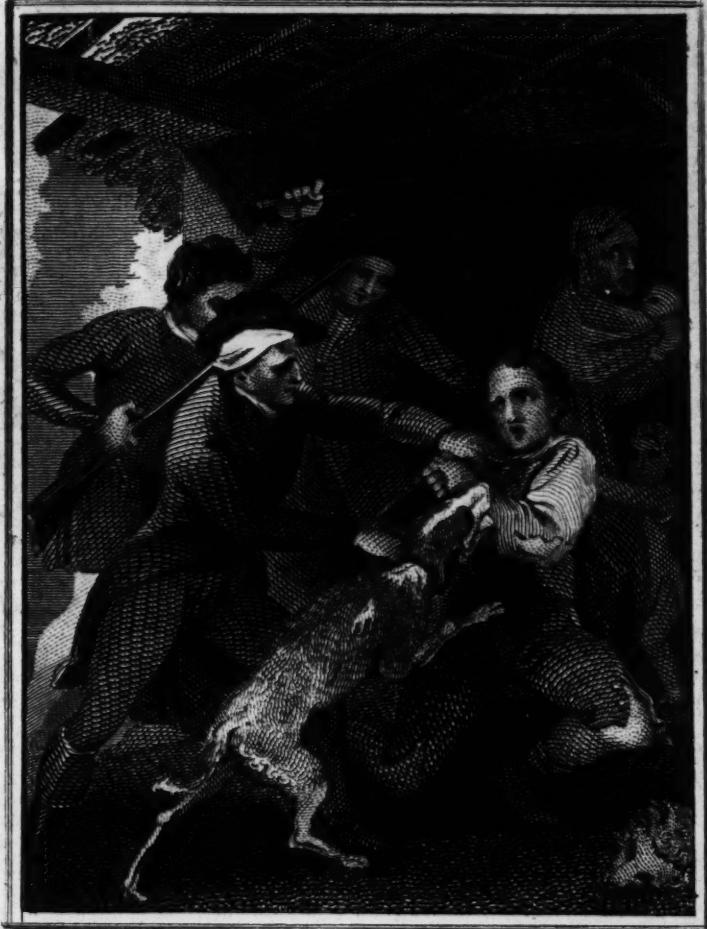
Or if th' harmonious thunder of the field 284

Delight thy ravish'd ears ; the deep-flew'd hound

Breed up with care, strong, heavy, slow, but sure,
Whose ears down-hanging from his thick round head
Shall sweep the morning dew, whose clanging voice
Awake the mountain echo in her cell,
And shake the forests : the bold talbot kind 290
Of these the prime, as white as ALPINE snows ;
And great their use of old. Upon the banks
Of TWEED, slow winding thro' the vale, the seat
Of war and rapine once, ere BRITONS knew
The sweets of peace, or ANNA's dread commands
To lasting leagues the haughty rivals aw'd, 296
There dwelt a pil'ring race ; well train'd and skill'd
In all the mysteries of theft, the spoil
Their only substance, feuds and war their sport :
Not more expert in ev'ry fraudulent art 300
Th' arch felon was of old, who by the tail

Drew back his lowing prize : in vain his wiles,
In vain the shelter of the cov'ring rock,
In vain the sooty cloud, and ruddy flames
That issu'd from his mouth ; for soon he paid 305
His forfeit life ; a debt how justly due
To wrong'd ALCIDES, and avenging Heav'n !
Veil'd in the shades of night they ford the stream,
Then prowling far and near, whate'er they seize 309
Becomes their prey ; nor flocks nor herds are safe,
Nor stalls protect the steer, nor strong-barr'd doors
Secure the fav'rite horse. Soon as the morn
Reveals his wrongs, with ghastly visage wan
The plunder'd owner stands, and from his lips
A thousand thronging curses burst their way : 315
He calls his stout allies, and in a line
His faithful hound he loads, then with a voice

That utters loud his rage, attentive cheers :
Soon the sagacious brute, his curling tail
Flourish'd in air, low bending plies around 320
His busy nose, the steaming vapour snuffs
Inquisitive, nor leaves one turf untried,
Till conscious of the recent stains his heart
Beats quick ; his snuffling nose, his active tail
Attest his joy : then with deep op'ning mouth 325
That makes the welkin tremble, he proclaims
Th' audacious felon ; foot by foot he marks
His winding way, while all the list'ning crowd
Applaud his reas'nings. O'er the wat'ry ford,
Dry sandy heaths, and stony barren hills, 330
O'er beaten paths, with men and beasts distain'd,
Unerring he pursues ; till at the cot
Arriv'd, and seizing by his guilty throat



Drawn by T. Stothard R.A.

Engraved by J. Heath

— And seizing by his guilty Throat
The Caitif vile.

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The caitiff vile, redeems the captive prey :

So exquisitely delicate his sense !

335

Should some more curious sportsman here inquire,
Whence this sagacity, this wondrous pow'r
Of tracing step by step, or man or brute ?

What guide invisible points out their way, 339

O'er the dank marsh, bleak hill, and sandy plain ?

The courteous Muse shall the dark cause reveal.

The blood that from the heart incessant rolls

In many a crimson tide, then here and there

In smaller rills disparted, as it flows

Propell'd, the serous particles evade 345

Thro' th' open pores, and with the ambient air

Entangling mix. As fuming vapours rise,

And hang upon the gently purling brook,

There by th' incumbent atmosphere compress'd.

The panting chace grows warmer as he flies, 350

And thro' the net-work of the skin perspires;

Leaves a long-steaming trail behind, which by

The cooler air condens'd, remains, unless

By some rude storm dispers'd, or rarefied

By the meridian sun's intenser heat. 355

To ev'ry shrub the warm effluvia cling,

Hang on the grass, impregnate earth and skies.

With nostrils op'ning wide, o'er hill, o'er dale,

The vig'rous hounds pursue, with ev'ry breath

Inhale the grateful steam, quick pleasures sting 360

Their tingling nerves, while they their thanks repay,

And in triumphant melody confess

The titillating joy. Thus on the air

Depend the hunter's hopes. When ruddy streaks

At eve forebode a blus't'ring stormy day, 365

Or low'ring clouds blacken the mountain's brow,

When nipping frosts, and the keen biting blasts

Of the dry parching east, menace the trees

With tender blossoms teeming, kindly spare

Thy sleeping pack, in their warm beds of straw 370

Low-sinking at their ease ; listless they shrink

Into some dark recess, nor hear thy voice

Tho' oft invok'd ; or haply if thy call

Rouse up the slumb'ring tribe, with heavy eyes

Glaz'd, lifeless, dull, downward they drop their tails

Inverted ; high on their bent backs eret 376

Their pointed bristles stare, or 'mong the tufts

Of ranker weeds, each stomach-healing plant

Curious they crop, sick, spiritless, forlorn.

These inauspicious days, on other cares 380

Employ thy precious hours ; th' improving friend
With open arms embrace, and from his lips
Glean science, season'd with good-natur'd wit.
But if th' inclement skies and angry Jove
Forbid the pleasing intercourse, thy books 385
Invite thy ready hand, each sacred page
Rich with the wise remarks of heroes old.
Converse familiar with th' illustrious dead ;
With great examples of old GREECE OR ROME
Enlarge thy free-born heart, and bless kind Heav'n,
That BRITAIN yet enjoys dear Liberty, 391
That balm of life, that sweetest blessing, cheap
Tho' purchas'd with our blood. Well-bred, polite,
Credit thy calling. See ! how mean, how low,
The bookless fauntring youth, proud of the skut 395
That dignifies his cap, his flourish'd belt,

And rusty couples gingling by his fide.

Be thou of other mold ; and know that such
Transporting pleasures were by Heav'n ordain'd
Wisdom's relief, and Virtue's great reward. 400

END OF THE FIRST BOOK.

4 DE 60

THE
SECOND BOOK
OF
THE CHASE.



A R G U M E N T.

Of the power of instinct in brutes. Two remarkable instances in the hunting of the roebuck, and in the hare going to seat in the morning. Of the variety of seats or forms of the hare, according to the change of the season, weather, or wind. Description of the hare-hunting in all its parts, interspersed with rules to be observed by those who follow that chase. Transition to the ASIATIC way of hunting, particularly the magnificent manner of the Great Mogul, and other TARTARIAN princes, taken from Monsieur BERNIER, and the history of GENGISKAN the Great. Concludes with a short reproof of tyrants and oppressors of mankind.



C H A S E.

BOOK II.

NOR will it less delight th' attentive sage
T' observe that instinct, which unerring guides
The brutal race, which mimics reason's lore
And oft transcends: Heav'n-taught the roe-buck swift
Loiters at ease before the driving pack, 5
And mocks their vain pursuit, nor far he flies
But checks his ardour, till the steaming scent

That freshens on the blade, provokes their rage.
Urg'd to their speed, his weak deluded foes 9
Soon flag fatigued ; strain'd to excess each nerve,
Each slacken'd finew fails ; they pant, they foam ;
Then o'er the lawn he bounds, o'er the high hills
Stretches secure, and leaves the scatter'd crowd
To puzzle in the distant vale below.

'Tis instinct that directs the jealous hare 15
To choose her soft abode : with step revers'd
She forms the doubling maze ; then, ere the morn
Peeps thro' the clouds, leaps to her close recess.

As wand'ring shepherds on th' ARABIAN plains
No settled residence observe, but shift 20
Their moving camp, now, on some cooler hill

With cedars crown'd, court the refreshing breeze ;
And then, below, where trickling streams distil
From some penurious source, their thirst allay,
And feed their fainting flocks : so the wise hares 25
Oft quit their seats, left some more curious eye
Should mark their haunts, and by dark treach'rous
wiles

Plot their destruction ; or perchance in hopes
Of plenteous forage, near the ranker mead,
Or matted blade, wary, and close they fit. 30

When Spring shines forth, season of love and joy,
In the moist marsh, 'mong beds of rushes hid,
They cool their boiling blood : when Summer suns
Bake the cleft earth, to thick wide-waving fields
Of corn full-grown, they lead their helpless young :
But when Autumnal torrents, and fierce rains 36
Deluge the vale, in the dry crumbling bank

Their forms they delve, and cautiously avoid
The dripping covert ; yet when Winter's cold
Their limbs benumb, thither with speed return'd
In the long grass they skulk, or shrinking creep 41
Among the whither'd leaves, thus changing still,
As fancy prompts them, or as food invites.

But ev'ry season carefully observ'd, •
Th' inconstant winds, the fickle element, 45
The wise experienc'd huntsman soon may find
His subtle, various game, nor waste in vain
His tedious hours, till his impatient hounds
With disappointment vex'd, each springing lark
Babbling pursue, far scatter'd o'er the fields. 50

Now golden Autumn from her open lap
Her fragrant bounties show'rs ; the fields are shorn ;

Inwardly smiling, the proud farmer views
The rising pyramids that grace his yard,
And counts his large increase ; his barns are stor'd,
And groaning staddles bend beneath their load. 56
All now is free as air, and the gay pack
In the rough bristly stubbles range unblam'd ;
No widow's tears o'erflow, no secret curse
Swells in the farmer's breast, which his pale lips 60
Trembling conceal, by his fierce landlord aw'd :
But courteous now he levels ev'ry fence,
Joins in the common cry, and halloos loud,
Charm'd with the rattling thunder of the field.
Oh bear me, some kind Pow'r invisible ! 65
To that extended lawn, where the gay court
View the swift racers, stretching to the goal ;
Games more renown'd, and a far nobler train,

Than proud ELEAN fields could boast of old.

Oh ! were a THEBAN lyre not wanting here, 70

And PINDAR's voice, to do their merit right !

Or to those spacious plains, where the strain'd eye

In the wide prospect lost, beholds at last

SARUM's proud spire, that o'er the hills ascends,

And pierces thro' the clouds. Or to thy downs, 75

Fair COTSWOLD, where the well-breath'd beagle

climbs,

With matchless speed, thy green aspiring brow,

And leaves the lagging multitude behind.

Hail, gentle Dawn ! mild blushing goddess, hail !

Rejoic'd I see thy purple mantle spread 80

O'er half the skies, gems pave thy radiant way,

And orient pearls from ev'ry shrub depend.

Farewell, CLEORA ; here deep sunk in down

Slumber secure, with happy dreams amus'd,
Till grateful steams shall tempt thee to receive 85
Thy early meal, or thy officious maids,
The toilet plac'd, shall urge thee to perform
Th' important work. Me other joys invite,
The horn sonorous calls, the pack awak'd
Their mattins chant, nor brook my long delay. 90
My courser hears their voice ; see there with ears
And tail erect, neighing he paws the ground ;
Fierce rapture kindles in his red'ning eyes,
And boils in ev'ry vein. As captive boys
Cow'd by the ruling rod, and haughty frowns 95
Of pedagogues severe, from their hard tasks,
If once dismiss'd, no limits can contain
The tumult rais'd within their little breasts,
But give a loose to all their frolic play :

So from their kennel rush the joyous pack ; 100

A thousand wanton gaieties express

Their inward ecstasy, their pleasing sport

Once more indulg'd, and liberty restor'd.

The rising sun that o'er th' horizon peeps,

As many colours from their glossy skins 105

Beaming reflects, as paint the various bow

When April show'rs descend. Delightful scene !

Where all around is gay, men, horses, dogs,

And in each smiling countenance appears

Fresh-blooming health, and universal joy. 110

Huntsman. lead on ! behind the clust'ring pack

Submiss attend, hear with respect thy whip

Loud-clanging, and thy harsher voice obey :

Spare not the straggling cur, that wildly roves ;

But let thy brisk assistant on his back 115

Imprint thy just resentments ; let each lash

Bite to the quick, till howling he return

And whining creep amid the trembling crowd.

Here on this verdant spot, where Nature kind,
With double blessings crowns the farmer's hopes ;
Where flowers autumnal spring, and the rank mead
Affords the wand'ring hares a rich repast,

122

Throw off thy ready pack. See, where they spread
And range around, and dash the glittering dew.

If some stanch hound, with his authentic voice,
Avow the recent trail, the justling tribe 126
Attend his call, then with one mutual cry
The welcome news confirm, and echoing hills
Repeat the pleasing tale. See how they thread

The brakes, and up yon furrow drive along ! 130

But quick they back recoil, and wisely check

Their eager haste ; then o'er the fallow'd ground

How leisurely they work, and many a pause

Th' harmonious concert breaks ; till more assur'd

With joy redoubled the low vallies ring. 135

What artful labyrinths perplex their way !

Ah ! there she lies ! how close ! she pants, she doubts

If now she lives ; she trembles as she fits,

With horror seiz'd. The wither'd grafts that clings

Around her head, of the same rufset hue, 140

Almost deceiv'd my sight, had not her eyes

With life full-beaming her vain wiles betray'd.

At distance draw thy pack, let all be hush'd,

No clamour loud, no frantic joy be heard,

Lest the wild hound run gadding o'er the plain

Untractable, nor hear thy chiding voice. 146

Now gently put her off; see how direct
To her known Muse she flies! Here, huntsman, bring

(But without hurry) all thy jolly hounds,

And calmly lay them in. How low they stoop,

And seem to plough the ground! then all at once

With greedy nostrils snuff the fuming steam 152

That glads their flutt'ring hearts. As winds let loose

From the dark caverns of the blust'ring god,

They burst away, and sweep the dewy lawn. 155

Hope gives them wings while she's spurr'd on by fear.

The welkin rings, men, dogs, hills, rocks, and woods

In the full concert join. Now, my brave youths,

Stript for the chase, give all your souls to joy!

See how their coursers, than the mountain roe 160

More fleet, the verdant carpet skim, thick clouds

Snorting they breathe, their shining hoofs scarce print
The grass unbruise'd ; with emulation fir'd
They strain to lead the field, top the barr'd gate,
O'er the deep ditch exulting bound, and brush 165
The thorny-twining hedge : the riders bend
O'er their arch'd necks ; with steady hands, by turns
Indulge their speed, or moderate their rage.

Where are their sorrows, disappointments, wrongs,
Vexations, sicknes, cares ? All, all are gone, 170
And with the panting winds lag far behind.

Huntsman ! her gait observe, if in wide rings
She wheel her mazy way, in the same round
Persisting still, she'll foil the beaten track.
But if she fly, and with the fav'ring wind 175
Urge her bold course ; less intricate thy task :

Push on thy pack. Like some poor exil'd wretch
The frightened chase leaves her late dear abodes,
O'er plains remote she stretches far away,
Ah ! never to return ! for greedy Death 180
Hov'ring exults, secure to seize his prey.

Hark ! from yon covert, where those tow'ring oaks
Above the humble copse aspiring rise,
What glorious triumphs burst in ev'ry gale
Upon our ravish'd ears ! The hunters shout, 185
The clanging horns swell their sweet-winding notes,
The pack wide-op'ning load the trembling air
With various melody ; from tree to tree
The propagated cry redoubling bounds,
And winged zephyrs waft the floating joy 190
Thro' all the regions near : afflictive birch

No more the school-boy dreads, his prison broke,
Scamp'ring he flies, nor heeds his master's call ;
The weary traveller forgets his road,
And climbs th' adjacent hill ; the ploughman leaves
Th' unfinish'd furrow ; nor his bleating flocks 196
Are now the shepherd's joy ; men, boys, and girls
Desert th' unpeopled village ; and wild crowds
Spread o'er the plain, by the sweet frenzy seiz'd.
Look, how she pants ! and o'er yon op'ning glade
Slips glancing by ; while, at the further end, 201
The puzzling pack unravel wile by wile,
Maze within maze. The covert's utmost bound
Slyly she skirts ; behind them cautious creeps,
And in that very track, so lately stain'd 205
By all the steaming crowd, seems to pursue
The foe she flies. Let cavillers deny

That brutes have reason ; sure 'tis something more,
'Tis Heav'n directs, and stratagems inspire,
Beyond the short extent of human thought. 210
But hold—I see her from the covert break ;
Sad on yon little eminence she sits ;
Intent she listens with one ear erect,
Pond'ring, and doubtful what new course to take,
And how t' escape the fierce blood-thirsty crew, 215
That still urge on, and still in vollies loud,
Insult her woes, and mock her sore distrefs.
As now in louder peals the loaded winds
Bring on the gath'ring storm, her fears prevail ;
And o'er the plain, and o'er the mountain's ridge,
Away she flies ; nor ships with wind and tide, 221
And all their canvas wings scud half so fast.
Once more, ye jovial train, your courage try,

And each clean courser's speed. We scour along,
In pleasing hurry and confusion tost ; 225
Oblivion to be wish'd. The patient pack
Hang on the scent unwearied ; up they climb,
And ardent we pursue ; our lab'ring steeds
We press, we gore ; till once the summit gain'd,
Painfully panting, there we breathe a-while ; 230
Then like a foaming torrent, pouring down
Precipitant, we smoke along the vale.
Happy the man, who with unrivall'd speed
Can pass his fellows, and with pleasure view
The struggling pack ; how in the rapid course
Alternate they preside, and justling push 236
To guide the dubious scent ; how giddy youth
Oft babbling errs, by wiser age reprov'd ;
How, niggard of his strength, the wise old hound

Hangs in the rear, till some important point 240

Rouse all his diligence, or till the chase

Sinking he finds; then to the head he springs,

With thirst of glory fir'd, and wins the prize.

Huntsman, take heed; they stop in full career.

Yon crowding flocks, that at a distance graze, 245

Have haply foil'd the turf. See that old hound!

How busily he works, but dares not trust

His doubtful sense; draw yet a wider ring.

Hark! now again the chorus fills. As bells

Sally'd a while at once their peal renew, 250

And high in air the tuneful thunder rolls.

See, how they toss, with animated rage

Recov'ring all they lost!—That eager haste

Some doubling wile foreshews.—Ah! yet once more

They're check'd—hold back with speed—on either

hand

255

They flourish round—ev'n yet persist—'Tis right,
Away they spring ; the rustling stubbles bend
Beneath the driving storm. Now the poor chase
Begins to flag, to her last shifts reduc'd.
From brake to brake she flies, and visits all 260
Her well-known haunts, where once she rang'd secure,
With love and plenty blest. See ! there she goes,
She reels along, and by her gait betrays
Her inward weakness. See, how black she looks !
The sweat that clogs th' obstructed pores, scarce leaves
A languid scent. And now in open view 266
See, see, she flies ! each eager hound exerts
His utmost speed, and stretches ev'ry nerve.
How quick she turns ! their gaping jaws eludes,
And yet a moment lives ; till round inclos'd 270
By all the greedy pack, with infant screams

She yields her breath, and there reluctant dies.

So when the furious BACCHANALS assail'd

THRACIAN ORPHEUS, poor ill-fated bard! 274

Loud was the cry, hills, woods, and HEBRUS' banks,

Return'd their clam'rous rage; distress'd he flies,

Shifting from place to place, but flies in vain;

For eager they pursue, till panting, faint,

By noisy multitudes o'erpower'd, he sinks,

To the relentless crowd a bleeding prey. 280

The huntsman now, a deep incision made,

Shakes out with hands impure, and dashes down

Her reeking entrails, and yet quiv'ring heart.

These claim the pack, the bloody perquisite 285

For all their toils. Stretch'd on the ground she lies,

A mangled corse; in her dim glaring eyes

Cold death exults, and stiffens ev'ry limb.

Aw'd by the threat'ning whip, the furious hounds

Around her bay; or at their master's foot,

Each happy fav'rite courts his kind applause, 290

With humble adulation cow'ring low.

All now is joy. With cheeks full-blown they wind

Her solemn dirge, while the loud-op'ning pack

The concert swell, and hills and dales return

The sadly-pleasing sounds. Thus the poor hare,

A puny, dastard animal, but vers'd 296

In subtle wiles, diverts the youthful train.

But if thy proud, aspiring soul disdains

So mean a prey, delighted with the pomp,

Magnificence and grandeur of the chase; 300

Hear what the Muse from faithful records sings.

Why on the banks of GEMNA, INDIAN stream,
Line within line, rise the pavilions proud,
Their silken streamers waving in the wind ? 304
Why neighs the warrior horse ? from tent to tent
Why press in crowds the buzzing multitude ?
Why shines the polish'd helm, and pointed lance,
This way and that far-beaming o'er the plain ?
Nor VISAPOUR nor GOLCONDA rebel ; 309
Nor the great SOPHI, with his num'rous host
Lays waste the provinces ; nor glory fires
To rob and to destroy, beneath the name
And specious guise of war. A nobler cause
Calls AURENGZEBE to arms. No cities sack'd,
No mother's tears, no helpless orphans' cries, 315
No violated leagues, with sharp remorse
Shall sting the conscious victor : but mankind

Shall hail him good and just. For 'tis on beasts
He draws his vengeful sword; on beasts of prey
Full-fed with human gore. See, see, he comes! 320
Imperial DELHI op'ning wide her gates,
Pours out her thronging legions, bright in arms,
And all the pomp of war. Before them sound
Clarions and trumpets, breathing martial airs,
And bold defiance. High upon his throne, 325
Borne on the back of his proud elephant,
Sits the great chief of TAMUR's glorious race:
Sublime he sits, amid the radiant blaze
Of gems and gold. OMRAHS about him crowd,
And rein th' ARABIAN steed, and watch his nod:
And potent RAJAHS, who themselves preside 331
O'er realms of wide extent; but here submiss
Their homage pay, alternate kings and slaves.

Next these, with prying eunuchs girt around,

The fair sultanas of his court ; a troop 335

Of chosen beauties, but with care conceal'd

From each intrusive eye ; one look is death.

Ah cruel Eastern law ! (had kings a pow'r

But equal to their wild tyrannic will)

To rob us of the sun's all-cheering ray, 340

Were less severe. The vulgar close the march,

Slaves and artificers ; and DELHI mourns

Her empty and depopulated streets.

Now at the camp arriv'd, with stern review,

Thro' groves of spears, from file to file he darts

His sharp experienc'd eye ; their order marks, 346

Each in his station rang'd, exact and firm,

Till in the boundless line his fight is lost.

Not greater multitudes in arms appear'd,

On these extended plains, when AMMON's son
With mighty PORUS in dread battle join'd, 351
The vassal world the prize. Nor was that host
More numerous of old, which the great king
Pour'd out on GREECE from all th' unpeopled East ;
That bridg'd the HELLESPONT from shore to shore,
And drank the rivers dry. Mean while in troops
The busy hunter-train mark out the ground, 257
A wide circumference ; full many a league
In compass round ; woods, rivers, hills, and plains,
Large provinces ; enough to gratify 360
Ambition's highest aim, could reason bound
Man's erring will. Now sit in close divan
The mighty chiefs of this prodigious host.
He from the throne high-eminent presides, 364
Gives out his mandates proud, laws of the chase,

From ancient records drawn. With rev'rence low,
And prostrate at his feet, the chiefs receive
His irreversible decrees, from which
To vary is to die. Then his brave bands
Each to his station leads ; encamping round, 370
Till the wide circle is completely form'd.
Where decent order reigns, what these command,
Those execute with speed, and punctual care ;
In all the strictest discipline of war :
As if some watchful foe, with bold insult . . . 375
Hung low'ring o'er the camp. The high resolve,
That flies on wings, thro' all th' encircling line,
Each motion steers, and animates the whole.
So by the sun's attractive pow'r controll'd, 379
The planets in their spheres roll round his orb.
On all he shines, and rules the great machine.

Ere yet the morn dispels the fleeting mists,
The signal giv'n by the loud trumpet's voice,
Now high in air th' imperial standard waves,
Emblazon'd rich with gold, and glitt'ring gems ;
And like a sheet of fire, thro' the dun gloom 386
Streaming meteorous. The soldiers shouts,
And all the brazen instruments of war,
With mutual clamor, and united din,
Fill the large concave. While from camp to camp,
They catch the varied sounds, floating in air, 391
Round all the wide circumference, tygers fell
Shrink at the noise ; deep in his gloomy den
The lion starts, and morfels yet unchew'd
Drop from his trembling jaws. Now all at once
Onward they march embattled, to the sound 396
Of martial harmony ; fifes, cornets, drums,

That rouse the sleepy soul to arms, and bold
Heroic deeds. In parties here and there
Detach'd o'er hill and dale, the hunters range
Inquisitive ; strong dogs that match in fight 401
The boldest brute, around their masters wait,
A faithful guard. No haunt unsearch'd, they drive
From ev'ry covert, and from ev'ry den,
The lurking savages. Incessant shouts 405
Re-echo thro' the woods, and kindling fires
Gleam from the mountain tops ; the forest seems
One mingling blaze : like flocks of sheep they fly
Before the flaming brand : fierce lions, pards,
Boars, tygers, bears, and wolves ; a dreadful crew
Of grim blood-thirsty foes : growling along, 411
They stalk indignant ; but fierce vengeance still
Hangs pealing on their rear, and pointed spears

Present immediate death. Soon as the night
Wrapt in her sable veil forbids the chase, 415
They pitch their tents, in even ranks around
The circling camp. The guards are plac'd, and fires
At proper distances ascending rise,
And paint th' horizon with their ruddy light.
So round some island's shore of large extent, 420
Amid the gloomy horrors of the night,
The billows breaking on the pointed rocks,
Seem all one flame, and the bright circuit wide
Appears a bulwark of surrounding fire. 424
What dreadful howlings, and what hideous roar,
Disturb those peaceful shades ! where erft the bird
That glads the night, had cheer'd the list'ning grove
With sweet complainings. Thro' the silent gloom
Oft they the guards assail ; as oft repell'd

They fly reluctant, with hot-boiling rage 430

Stung to the quick, and mad with wild despair.

Thus day by day, they still the chase renew;

At night encamp; till now in straighter bounds

The circle lessens, and the beasts perceive

The wall that hems them in on ev'ry side. 435

And now their fury bursts, and knows no mean;

From man they turn, and point their ill-judg'd rage

Against their fellow brutes. With teeth and claws

The civil war begins; grappling they tear.

Lions on tygers prey, and bears on wolves: 440

Horrible discord! till the crowd behind

Shouting pursue, and part the bloody fray.

At once their wrath subsides; tame as the lamb

The lion hangs his head, the furious pard, 444

Cow'd and subdu'd, flies from the face of man,

Nor bears one glance of his commanding eye.
So abject is a tyrant in distress.

At last within the narrow plain confin'd,
A listed field, mark'd out for bloody deeds,
An amphitheatre more glorious far 450
Than ancient Rome could boast, they crowd in heaps,
Dismay'd, and quite appall'd. In meet array
Sheath'd in refulgent arms, a noble band
Advance ; great lords of high imperial blood,
Early resolv'd t' assert their royal race, 455
And prove by glorious deeds their valour's growth
Mature, ere yet the callow down has spread
Its curling shade. On bold ARABIAN steeds
With decent pride they sit, that fearless hear
The lion's dreadful roar ; and down the rock 460
Swift-shooting plunge, or o'er the mountain's ridge

Stretching along, the greedy tyger leave
Panting behind. On foot their faithful slaves
With javelins arm'd attend ; each watchful eye
Fix'd on his youthful care, for him alone 465
He fears, and to redeem his life, unmov'd
Would lose his own. The mighty AURENGZEBE,
From his high-elevated throne, beholds
His blooming race ; revolving in his mind
What once he was, in his gay spring of life, 470
When vigour strung his nerves. Parental joy
Melts in his eyes, and flushes in his cheeks.
Now the loud trumpet sounds a charge. The shouts
Of eager hosts, thro' all the circling line,
And the wild howlings of the beasts within 475
Rend wide the welkin, flights of arrows, wing'd
With death, and javelins launch'd from ev'ry arm,

Gall sore the brutal bands, with many a wound
Gor'd thro' and thro'. Despair at last prevails,
When fainting nature shrinks, and rouses all 480
Their drooping courage. Swell'd with furious rage,
Their eyes dart fire ; and on the youthful band
They rush implacable. They their broad shields
Quick interpōse ; on each devoted head
Their flaming falchions, as the bolts of Jove, 485
Descend unerring. Prostrate on the ground
The grinning monsters lie, and their foul gore
Defiles the verdant plain. Nor idle stand
The trusty slaves; with pointed spears they pierce
Thro' their tough hides ; or at their gaping mouths
An easier passage find. The king of brutes 491
In broken roarings breathes his last ; the bear
Grumbles in death ; nor can his spotted skin,



Drawn by T. Stothard R.A.

Engraved by R. Slaun.

— and on the youthful Band.
They rush implacable?

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Tho' sleek it shine, with varied beauties gay,
Save the proud pard from unrelenting fate. 495

The battle bleeds, grim Slaughter strides along,

Glutting her greedy jaws, grins o'er her prey.

Men, horses, dogs, fierce beasts of ev'ry kind,

A strange promiscuous carnage, drench'd in blood,

And heaps on heaps amass'd. What yet remain

Alive, with vain assault contend to break 501

Th' impenetrable line. Others, whom fear

Inspires with self-preserving wiles, beneath

The bodies of the slain for shelter creep.

Aghast they fly, or hide their heads dispers'd. 505

And now perchance (had heav'n but pleas'd) the

work

Of death had been complete ; and AURENGZEBE

By one dread frown extinguish'd half their race.

When lo ! the bright sultanas of his court

Appear, and to his ravish'd eyes display 510
Those charms, but rarely to the day reveal'd.

Lowly they bend, and humbly sue, to save
The vanquish'd host. What mortal can deny
When suppliant beauty begs ? At his command
Op'ning to right and left, the well-train'd troops
Leave a large void for their retreating foes. 516
Away they fly, on wings of fear upborne,
To seek on distant hills their late abodes.

Ye proud oppressors, whose vain hearts exult
In wantonness of pow'r, 'gainst the brute race, 520
Fierce robbers like yourselves, a guiltless war
Wage uncontroll'd : here quench your thirst of blood;
But learn from AURENGZEEB to spare mankind.

END OF THE SECOND BOOK.

THE
THIRD BOOK
OF
THE CHASE.



OF King EDGAR and his imposing a tribute of wolves heads upon the kings of WALES : from hence a transition to fox-hunting, which is described in all its parts. Censure of an over-numerous pack. Of the several engines to destroy foxes, and other wild beasts. The steel-trap described, and the manner of using it. Description of the pitfall for the lion; and another for the elephant. The ancient way of hunting the tyger with a mirror. The ARABIAN manner of hunting the wild boar. Description of the royal stag-chase at WINDSOR FOREST. Concludes with an address to his Majesty, and an eulogy upon mercy.

THE
CHASE.

BOOK III.

IN ALBION's isle when glorious EDGAR reign'd,
He wisely provident, from her white cliffs
Launch'd half her forests, and with num'rous fleets
Cover'd his wide domain : there proudly rode
Lord of the deep, the great prerogative 5
Of BRITISH monarchs. Each invader bold,
DANE and NORWEGIAN, at a distance gaz'd,

And disappointed, gnash'd his teeth in vain.
He scour'd the seas, and to remotest shores
With swelling sails the trembling corsair fled. 10
Rich commerce flourish'd ; and with busy oars
Dash'd the resounding surge. Nor less at land
His royal cares ; wise, potent, gracious prince !
His subjects from their cruel foes he fav'd,
And from rapacious savages their flocks. 15
CAMBRIA's proud kings (tho' with reluctance) paid
Their tributary wolves ; head after head,
In full account, till the woods yield no more,
And all the rav'nous race extinct is lost.
In fertile pastures, more securely graz'd 20
The social troops ; and soon their large increase
With curling fleeces whiten'd all the plains.
But yet, alas ! the wily fox remain'd,

A subtle, pil'ring foe, prowling around
In midnight shades, and wakeful to destroy. 25
In the full fold, the poor defenceless lamb,
Seiz'd by his guileful arts, with sweet warm blood
Supplies a rich repast. The mournful ewe,
Her dearest treasure lost, thro' the dun night 29
Wanders perplex'd, and darkling bleats in vain :
While in th' adjacent bush, poor PHILOMEL,
(Herself a parent once, till wanton churls
Despoil'd her nest) joins in her loud laments,
With sweeter notes, and more melodious woe.

For these nocturnal thieves, huntsman, prepare
Thy sharpest vengeance. Oh ! how glorious 'tis
To right th' oppress'd, and bring the felon vile
To just disgrace ! Ere yet the morning peep,
Or stars retire from the first blush of day,

With thy far-echoing voice alarm thy pack, 40
And rouse thy bold compeers. Then to the copse,
Thick with entangling grass, or prickly furze,
With silence lead thy many-colour'd hounds,
In all their beauty's pride. See ! how they range
Dispers'd, how busily this way and that 45
They cross, examining with curious nose
Each likely haunt. Hark ! on the drag I hear
Their doubtful notes, preluding to a cry
More nobly full, and swell'd with ev'ry mouth.
As straggling armies at the trumpet's voice, 50
Press to their standard ; hither all repair,
And hurry thro' the woods ; with hasty step
Rustling, and full of hope ; now driv'n on heaps
They push, they strive ; while from his kennel sneaks
The conscious villain. See ! he skulks along, 55

Sleek at the shepherd's cost, and plump with meals
Purloin'd. So thrive the wicked here below.
Tho' high his brush he bear, tho' tipt with white
It gayly shine, yet ere the sun declin'd
Recall the shades of night, the pamper'd rogue 60
Shall rue his fate revers'd ; and at his heels
Behold the just avenger, swift to seize
His forfeit head, and thirsting for his blood.

Heav'ns ! what melodious strains ! how beat our
hearts

Big with tumultuous joy ! the loaded gales 65
Breathe harmony ; and as the tempest drives
From wood to wood, thro' ev'ry dark recess
The forest thunders, and the mountains shake.
The chorus swells ; less various, and less sweet
The trilling notes, when in those very groves, 70

The feather'd choristers salute the spring,
And ev'ry bush in concert joins ; or when
The master's hand, in modulated air,
Bids the loud organ breathe, and all the pow'rs
Of music in one instrument combine, 75
An universal minstrelsy. And now
In vain each earth he tries, the doors are barr'd
Impregnable, nor is the covert safe ;
He pants for purer air. Hark ! what loud shouts
Re-echo thro' the groves ! he breaks away, 80
Shrill horns proclaim his flight. Each straggling
hound
Strains o'er the lawn to reach the distant pack.
'Tis triumph all and joy. Now, my brave youths,
Now give a loose to the clean gen'rous steed ;
Flourish the whip, nor spare the galling spur ; 85
But in the madness of delight, forget

Your fears. Far o'er the rocky hills we range,
And dangerous our course ; but in the brave
True courage never fails. In vain the stream
In foaming eddies whirls ; in vain the ditch 90
Wide gaping threatens death. The craggy steep
Where the poor dizzy shepherd crawls with care,
And clings to ev'ry twig, gives us no pain ;
But down we sweep, as stoops the falcon bold 94
To pounce his prey. Then up th' opponent hill,
By the swift motion flung, we mount aloft :
So ships in winter seas now fliding sink
Adown the steepy wave, then toss'd on high
Ride on the billows, and defy the storm. 99

What lengths we pass ! where will the wand'ring

chase

Lead us bewilder'd ! smooth as the swallows skim

The new-shorn mead, and far more swift we fly.

See my brave pack ! how to the head they press,

Justling in close array ; then more diffuse 104

Obliquely wheel, while from their op'ning mouths

The vollied thunder breaks. So when the cranes

Their annual voyage steer, with wanton wing

Their figure oft they change, and their loud clang

From cloud to cloud rebounds. How far behind

The hunter-crew, wide straggling o'er the plain !

The panting courser now with trembling nerves 111

Begins to reel ; urg'd by the goring spur,

Makes many a faint effort : he snorts, he foams,

The big round drops run trickling down his sides,

With sweat and blood distain'd. Look back and

view

The strange confusion of the vale below, 116

Where sour vexation reigns ; see yon poor jade,

In vain th' impatient rider frets and fwears,
With galling spurs harrows his mangled sides ;
He can no more : his stiff unpliant limbs 120
Rooted in earth, unmov'd and fix'd he stands,
For ev'ry cruel curse returns a groan,
And sobs, and faints, and dies. Who without grief
Can view that pamper'd steed, his master's joy,
His minion, and his daily care, well cloth'd, 125
Well fed with ev'ry nicer cate ; no cost,
No labour spar'd ; who, when the flying chase
Broke from the copse, without a rival led
The num'rous train : now a sad spectacle
Of pride brought low, and humbled insolence, 130
Drove like a pannier'd ass, and scourg'd along.
While these with loosen'd reins and dangling heels,
Hang on their reeling palfreys, that scarce bear

Their weights ; another in the treach'rous bog 134

Lies flound'ring half ingulph'd. What biting
thoughts

Torment th' abandon'd crew ! Old age laments
His vigour spent : the tall, plump, brawny youth
Curves his cumb'rous bulk ; and envies now
The short pygmean race he whilom kenn'd
With proud insulting leer. A chosen few 140

Alone the sport enjoy, nor droop beneath
Their pleasing toils. Here, huntsman, from this height
Observe yon birds of prey ; if I can judge,

'Tis there the villain lurks ; they hover round 144
And claim him as their own. Was I not right ?
See ! there he creeps along ; his brush he drags,
And sweeps the mire impure ; from his wide jaws
His tongue unmoisten'd hangs ; symptoms too sure
Of sudden death. Ha ! yet he flies, nor yields

To black despair. But one loose more, and all 150

His wiles are vain. Hark ! thro' yon village now

The rattling clamor rings. The barns, the cots,

And leafless elms return the joyous sounds.

Thro' ev'ry homestall, and thro' ev'ry yard,

His midnight walks, panting, forlorn, he flies ; 155

Thro' ev'ry hole he sneaks, thro' ev'ry jakes

Plunging he wades besmear'd, and fondly hopes

In a superior stench to lose his own :

But faithful to the track, th' unerring hounds

With peals of echoing vengeance close pursue. 160

And now distress'd, no shelt'ring covert near,

Into the hen-roost creeps, whose walls with gore

Distain'd attest his guilt. There, villain ! there

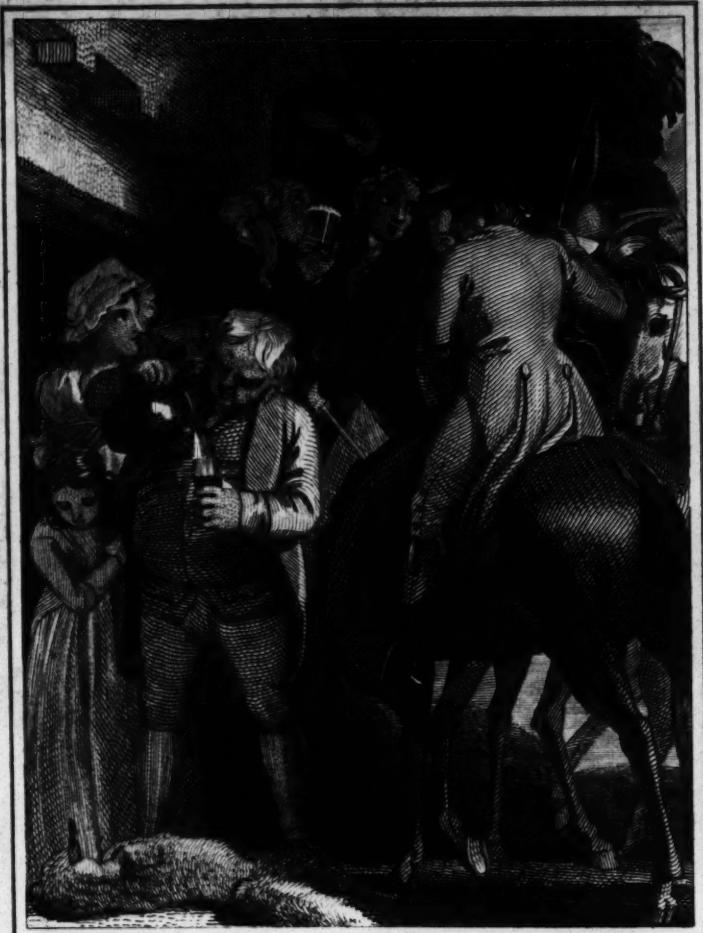
Expect thy fate deserv'd. And soon from thence

The pack inquisitive, with clamour loud, 165

Drag out their trembling prize ; and on his blood
With greedy transport feast. In bolder notes
Each sounding horn proclaims the felon dead ;
And all th' assembled village shouts for joy.

The farmer who beholds his mortal foe 170
Stretch'd at his feet, applauds the glorious deed,
And grateful calls us to a short repast :
In the full glass the liquid amber smiles,
Our native product. And his good old mate
With choicest viands heaps the lib'ral board, 175
To crown our triumphs, and reward our toils.

Here must th' instructive Muse (but with respect)
Censure that num'rous pack, that crowd of state,
With which the vain profusion of the great 179
Covers the lawn, and shakes the trembling copse.



Drawn by T. Stothard, R.A.

Engraved by J. Parker.

*The Farmer who beholds his mortal Foe
Stretch'd at his Feet, applauds the Glorious Dead,
And grateful calls us to a short Repast.*

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Pompous incumbrance ! A magnificence
Useless, vexatious ! For the wily fox,
Safe in th' increasing number of his foes,
Kens well the great advantage : flinks behind,
And flyly creeps thro' the same beaten track, 185
And hunts them step by step ; then views, escap'd,
With inward ecstasy, the panting throng
In their own footsteps puzzled, foil'd and lost.
So when proud Eastern kings summon to arms
Their gaudy legions, from far distant climes 190
They flock in crowds, unpeopling half a world :
But when the day of battle calls them forth
To charge the well-train'd foe, a band compact
Of chosen vet'rans, they press blindly on,
In heaps confus'd, by their own weapons fall, 195
A smoking carnage scatter'd o'er the plain.

Nor hounds alone this noxious brood destroy :
The plunder'd warrener full many a wile
Devises to entrap his greedy foe,
Fat with nocturnal spoils. At close of day 200
With silence drags his trail ; then from the ground
Pares thin the close-graz'd turf ; there with nice hand
Covers the latent death, with curious springs .
Prepar'd to fly at once, whene'er the tread
Of man or beast unwarily shall press 205
The yielding surface. By th' indented steel
With gripe tenacious held, the felon grins,
And struggles, but in vain : yet oft 'tis known,
When ev'ry art has fail'd, the captive fox
Has shar'd the wounded joint, and with a limb 210
Compounded for his life. But if perchance
In the deep pitfall plung'd, there's no escape ;

But unrepriev'd he dies, and bleach'd in air
The jest of clowns, his reeking carcase hangs.

Of these are various kinds ; not ev'n the king
Of brutes evades this deep devouring grave : 216
But by the wily AFRICAN betray'd,
Hedless of fate, within its gaping jaws
Expires indignant. When the orient beam 219
With blushes paints the dawn, and all the race
Carnivorous, with blood full-gorg'd, retire
Into their darksome cells, there, satiate, snore
O'er dripping offals, and the mangled limbs
Of men and beasts, the painful forester 224
Climbs the high hills, whose proud aspiring tops,
With the tall cedar crown'd, and taper fir,
Assail the clouds. There 'mong the craggy rocks,

And thickets intricate, trembling he views
His footsteps in the sand ; the dismal road
And avenue to death. Hither he calls 230
His watchful bands ; and low into the ground
A pit they sink, full many a fathom deep.
Then in the midst a column high is rear'd,
The butt of some fair tree ; upon whose top
A lamb is plac'd, just ravish'd from his dam. 235
And next a wall they build, with stones and earth
Encircling round, and hiding from all view
The dreadful precipice. Now when the shades
Of night hang low'ring o'er the mountain's brow,
And hunger keen, and pungent thirst of blood, 240
Rouze up the slothful beast, he shakes his sides,
Slow rising from his lair, and stretches wide
His rav'rous jaws, with recent gore distain'd.

The forests tremble as he roars aloud,
Impatient to destroy. O'erjoy'd he hears 245
The bleating innocent, that claims in vain
The shepherd's care, and seeks with piteous moan
The foodful teat ; himself, alas ! design'd
Another's meal. For now the greedy brute 249
Winds him from far ; and leaping o'er the mound
To seize his trembling prey, headlong is plung'd
Into the deep abyss. Prostrate he lies
Astunn'd and impotent. Ah ! what avail
Thine eye-balls flashing fire, thy length of tail
That lashes thy broad sides ; thy jaws besmear'd 255
With blood and offals crude, thy shaggy mane,
The terror of the woods ; thy stately port,
And bulk enormous, since by stratagem
Thy strength is foil'd ? Unequal is the strife,
When sov'reign reason combats brutal rage. 260

On distant ETHIOPIA's sun-burnt coasts,
The black inhabitants a pitfall frame,
But of a diff'rent kind, and diff'rent use.
With slender poles the wide capacious mouth,
And hurdles flight, they close ; o'er these is spread
A floor of verdant turf, with all its flow'rs 266
Smiling delusive, and from strictest search
Concealing the deep grave that yawns below.
Then boughs of trees they cut, with tempting fruit
Of various kinds surcharg'd ; the downy peach,
The clust'ring vine, and of bright golden rind
The fragrant orange. Soon as ev'ning grey
Advances flow, besprinkling all around
With kind refreshing dews the thirsty glebe,
The stately elephant from the close shade 275
With step majestic strides, eager to taste

The cooler breeze, that from the sea-beat shore

Delightful breathes, or in the limpid stream

To lave his panting sides ; joyous he scents

The rich repast, unweeting of the death 280

That lurks within. And soon he sporting breaks

The brittle boughs, and greedily devours

The fruit delicious. Ah ! too dearly bought ;

The price is life. For now the treach'rous turf

Trembling gives way ; and the unwieldy beast 285

Self-sinking, drops into the dark profound.

So when dilated vapours, struggling heave

Th' incumbent earth ; if chance the cavern'd ground

Shrinking subside, and the thin surface yield, 289

Down sinks at once the pond'rous dome, ingulph'd

With all its tow'rs. Subtle, delusive man !

How various are thy wiles ! artful to kill

Thy savage foes, a dull unthinking race !

Fierce from his lair springs forth the speckled pard,

Thirsting for blood, and eager to destroy ; 295

The huntsman flies, but to his flight alone

Confides not : at convenient distance fix'd,

A polish'd mirror stops in full career

The furious brute : he there his image views ;

Spots against spots with rage improving glow ; 300

Another pard his bristly whiskers curls,

Grins as he grins, fierce-menacing, and wide

Distends his op'ning paws ; himself against

Himself oppos'd, and with dread vengeance arm'd.

The huntsman now secure, with fatal aim 305

Directs the pointed spear, by which transfix'd

He dies, and with him dies the rival shade.

Thus man innum'rous engines forms, t' assaile

The savage kind : but most the docile horse,
Swift and confederate with man, annoys 310
His brethren of the plains ; without whose aid
The hunter's arts are vain, unskill'd to wage
With the more active brutes an equal war.
But borne by him, without the well-train'd pack,
Man dares his foe, on wings of wind secure. 315

Him the fierce ARAB mounts, and with his troop
Of bold compeers, ranges the deserts wild,
Where by the magnet's aid, the traveller
Steers his untrodden course ; yet oft on land
Is wreck'd, in the high-rolling waves of sand 320
Iimmers'd and lost. While these intrepid bands,
Safe in their horses speed, out-fly the storm,
And scouring round, make men and beasts their prey.

The grisly boar is singled from his herd
As large as that in ERMANTHIAN woods, 325
A match for HERCULES. Round him they fly
In circles wide; and each in passing sends
His feather'd death into his brawny sides.
But perilous th' attempt. For if the steed
Haply too near approach; or the loose earth 330
His footing fail; the watchful angry beast
Th' advantage spies; and at one sidelong glance
Rips up his groin. Wounded, he rears aloft,
And plunging, from his back the rider hurls
Precipitant; then bleeding spurns the ground, 335
And drags his reeking entrails o'er the plain.
Meanwhile the surly monster trots along,
But with unequal speed; for still they wound,
Swift-wheeling in the spacious ring. A wood

Of darts upon his back he bears; adown 340

His tortur'd sides, the crimson torrents roll

From many a gaping font. And now at last

Stagg'ring he falls, in blood and foam expires.

But whither roves my devious muse, intent

On antique tales, while yet the royal stag 345

Unfung remains? Tread with respectful awe

WINDSOR's green glades; where DENHAM, tuneful

bard,

Charm'd once the lift'ning dryads, with his song

Sublimely sweet. Oh! grant me, sacred shade,

To glean submiss what thy full fickle leaves. 350

The morning sun that gilds with trembling rays
WINDSOR's high tow'rs, beholds the courtly train

Mount for the chase, nor views in all his course
A scene so gay : heroic, noble youths, 354
In arts and arms renown'd, and lovely nymphs
The fairest of this isle, where Beauty dwells
Delighted, and deserts her PAPHIAN grove
For our more favor'd shades : in proud parade
These shine magnificent, and press around
The royal happy pair. Great in themselves, 360
They smile superior ; of external show
Regardless, while their inbred virtues give
A lustre to their pow'r, and grace their court
With real splendors, far above the pomp
Of eastern kings, in all their tinsel pride. 365
Like troops of AMAZONS, the female band
Prance round their cars, not in refulgent arms
As those of old ; unskill'd to wield the sword,

Or bend the bow, these kill with surer aim.

The royal offspring, fairest of the fair, 370

Lead on the splendid train. ANNA, more bright

Than summer suns, or as the lightning keen,

With irresistible effulgence arm'd,

Fires ev'ry heart. He must be more than man,

Who unconcern'd can bear the piercing ray. 375

AMELIA, milder than the blushing dawn,

With sweet engaging air, but equal pow'r,

Inensibly subdues, and in soft chains

Her willing captives leads. Illustrious maids,

Ever triumphant ! whose victorious charms, 380

Without the needless aid of high descent,

Had aw'd mankind, and taught the world's great lords

To bow and sue for grace. But who is he

Fresh as a rose-bud newly blown, and fair

As op'ning lilies ; on whom ev'ry eye 385
With joy and admiration dwells ? See, see,
He reins his docile barb with manly grace.
Is it ADONIS for the chase array'd ?
Or BRITAIN's second hope ? Hail, blooming youth !
May all your virtues with your years improve, 390
Till in consummate worth, you shine the pride
Of these our days, and to succeeding times
A bright example. As his guard of mutes
On the great sultan wait, with eyes deject
And fix'd on earth, no voice, no sound is heard
Within the wide serail, but all is hush'd, 396
And awful silence reigns; thus stand the pack
Mute and unmov'd, and cow'ring low to earth,
While pass the glitt'ring court, and royal pair :
So disciplin'd those hounds, and so reserv'd, 400

Whose honour 'tis to glad the hearts of kings.
But soon the winding horn, and huntsman's voice,
Let loose the gen'ral chorus ; far around
Joy spreads its wings, and the gay morning smiles.

Unharbour'd now the royal stag forsakes 405

His wonted lair ; he shakes his dappled sides,
And tosses high his beamy head, the copse
Beneath his antlers bends. What doubling shifts
He tries ! not more the wily hare ; in these
Would still persist, did not the full-mouth'd pack
With dreadful concert thunder in his rear. 411

The woods reply, the hunter's cheering shouts
Float thro' the glades, and the wide forest rings.
How merrily they chant ! their nostrils deep
Inhale the grateful steam. Such is the cry, 415

And such th' harmonious din, the soldier deems
The battle kindling, and the statesman grave
Forgets his weighty cares ; each age, each sex
In the wild transport joins ; luxuriant joy,
And pleasure in excess, sparkling exult 420
On ev'ry brow, and revel unrestrain'd.

How happy art thou, man, when thou'rt no more
Thyself ! when all the pangs that grind thy soul,
In rapture and in sweet oblivion lost,
Yield a short interval, and ease from pain ! 425

See the swift courser strains, his shining hoofs
Securely beat the solid ground. Who now
The dang'rous pitfall fears, with tangling heath
High-overgrown ? Or who the quiv'ring bog
Soft yielding to the step ? All now is plain, 430

Plain as the strand sea-lav'd, that stretches far
Beneath the rocky shore. Glades crossing glades
The forest opens to our wond'ring view :
Such was the king's command. Let tyrants fierce
Lay waste the world ; his the more glorious part 435
To check their pride ; and when the brazen voice
Of war is hush'd (as erst victorious ROME)
T' employ his station'd legions in the works
Of peace ; to smooth the rugged wilderness,
To drain the stagnate fen, to raiſe the slope 440
Depending road, and to make gay the face
Of nature, with th' embellishments of art.

How melts my beating heart ! as I behold
Each lovely nymph our island's boast and pride,
Push on the gen'rous steed, that strokes along 445

O'er rough, o'er smooth, nor heeds the steepy hill,
Nor faulters in th' extended vale below :
Their garments loosely waving in the wind,
And all the flush of beauty in their cheeks !
While at their sides their pensive lovers wait, 450
Direct their dubious course ; now chill'd with fear
Solicitous, and now with love inflam'd.
Oh ! grant, indulgent Heav'n, no rising storm
May darken with black wings this glorious scene !
Should some malignant pow'r thus damp our joys,
Vain were the gloomy cave, such as of old 455
Betray'd to lawless love the TYRIAN queen.
For BRITAIN's virtuous nymphs are chaste as fair,
Spotless, unblam'd, with equal triumph reign
In the dun gloom, as in the blaze of day. 460

Now the blown stag, thro' woods, bogs, roads,
and streams

Has measur'd half the forest; but alas!

He flies in vain, he flies not from his fears.

Tho' far he cast the ling'ring pack behind,

His haggard fancy still with horrors views 465

The fell destroyer; still the fatal cry

Insults his ears, and wounds his trembling heart.

So the poor fury-haunted wretch (his hands

In guiltless blood distain'd) still seems to hear 469

The dying shrieks; and the pale threat'ning ghost

Moves as he moves, and as he flies pursues.

See here his slot; up yon green hill he climbs,

Pants on its brow a while, sadly looks back

On his pursuers, cov'ring all the plain; 474

But wrung with anguish, bears not long the sight,

Shoots down the steep, and sweats along the vale :
There mingles with the herd, where once he reign'd
Proud monarch of the groves, whose clashing beam
His rivals aw'd, and whose exalted pow'r
Was still rewarded with successful love. 480
But the base herd have learn'd the ways of men,
Averse they fly, or with rebellious aim
Chase him from thence : needless their impious deed,
The huntsman knows him by a thousand marks,
Black, and imbold : nor are his hounds deceiv'd ;
Too well distinguish these, and never leave 486
Their once devoted foe ; familiar grows
His scent, and strong their appetite to kill.
Again he flies, and with redoubled speed
Skims o'er the lawn ; still the tenacious crew 490
Hang on the track, aloud demand their prey,

And push him many a league. If haply then
Too far escap'd, and the gay courtly train
Behind are cast, the huntsman's clang ing whip
Stops full their bold career; passive they stand, 495
Unmov'd, an humble, an obsequious crowd,
As if by stern MEDUSA gaz'd to stones.
So at their gen'ral's voice whole armies halt
In full pursuit, and check their thirst of blood.
Soon at the king's command, like hasty streams 500
Damm'd up a while, they foam, and pour along
With fresh-recruited might. The stag, who hop'd
His foes were lost, now once more hears astunn'd
The dreadful din; he shivers ev'ry limb, 504
He starts, he bounds; each bush presents a foe.
Press'd by the fresh relay, no pause allow'd,
Breathless, and faint, he faulters in his pace,

And lifts his weary limbs with pain, that scarce
Sustain their load ! he pants, he sobs appall'd ;
Drops down his heavy head to earth, beneath 510
His cumbrous beams oppres'd. But if perchance
Some prying eye surprise him ; soon he rears
Erect his tow'ring front, bounds o'er the lawn
With ill-dissembled vigour, to amuse
The knowing forester ; who inly smiles 515
At his weak shifts, and unavailing frauds.
So midnight tapers waste their last remains,
Shine forth a while, and as they blaze expire.
From wood to wood redoubling thunders roll,
And bellow thro' the vales ; the moving storm 520
Thickens amain, and loud triumphant shouts,
And horns shrill-warbling in each glade, prelude
To his approaching fate. And now in view

With hobbling gait, and high, exerts amaz'd
What strength is left : to the last dregs of life
Reduc'd, his spirits fail, on ev'ry side 526
Hemm'd in, besieg'd ; not the least op'ning left
To gleaming hope, th' unhappy's last reserve.
Where shall he turn? or whither fly? Despair
Gives courage to the weak. Resolv'd to die, 530
He fears no more, but rushes on his foes,
And deals his deaths around ; beneath his feet
These grov'ling lie, those by his antlers gor'd
Defile th' ensanguin'd plain. Ah! see distress'd
He stands at bay against yon knotty trunk, 535
That covers well his rear, his front presents
An host of foes. O! shun, ye noble train,
The rude encounter, and believe your lives
Your country's due alone. As now aloof

They wing around, he finds his soul uprais'd 540

To dare some great exploit ; he charges home

Upon the broken pack, that on each side

Fly diverse ; then as o'er the turf he strains,

He vents the cooling stream, and up the breeze

Urges his course with eager violence : 545

Then takes the foil, and plunges in the flood

Precipitant ; down the mid-stream he wafts

Along, till (like a ship distress'd, that runs

Into some winding creek) close to the verge

Of a small island, for his weary feet 550

Sure anchorage he finds, there skulks immers'd.

His nose alone above the wave draws in

The vital air ; all else beneath the flood

Conceal'd, and lost, deceives each prying eye

Of man or brute. In vain the crowding pack 555

Draw on the margin of the stream, or cut
The liquid wave with oary feet, that move
In equal time. The gliding waters leave
No trace behind, and his contracted pores
But sparingly perspire ; the huntsman strains 560
His lab'ring lungs, and puffs his cheeks in vain :
At length a blood-hound bold, studious to kill,
And exquisite of sense, winds him from far ;
Headlong he leaps into the flood, his mouth 564
Loud op'ning spends amain, and his wide throat
Swells ev'ry note with joy ; then fearless dives
Beneath the wave, hangs on his haunch, and wounds
Th' unhappy brute, that flounders in the stream,
Sorely distress'd, and struggling strives to mount
The steepy shore. Haply once more escap'd ; 570
Again he stands at bay, amid the groves

Of willows, bending low their downy heads.
Outrageous transport fires the greedy pack ;
These swim the deep, and those crawl up with pain
The flipp'ry bank, while others on firm land 575
Engage ; the stag repels each bold assault,
Maintains his post, and wounds for wounds returns.
As when some wily corsair boards a ship
Full-freighted, or from AFRIC's golden coasts,
Or INDIA's wealthy strand, his bloody crew 580
Upon her deck he flings ; these in the deep
Drop short, and swim to reach her steepy sides,
And clinging, climb aloft ; while those on board
Urge on the work of Fate ; the master bold,
Press'd to his last retreat, bravely resolves 585
To sink his wealth beneath the whelming wave,
. His wealth, his foes, nor unreveng'd to die.



Drawn by T. Stothard R.A.

Engraved by L. Nangle.

— the Stag repells each bold Assault,

Published August 1st. 1796. by Cadell and Davies Strand.



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So fares it with the stag : so he resolves
To plunge at once into the flood below,
Himself, his foes, in one deep gulph immers'd.

Ere yet he executes this dire intent, 591

In wild disorder once more views the light ;
Beneath a weight of woe he groans distress'd :
The tears run trickling down his hairy cheeks ;
He weeps, nor weeps in vain. The king beholds
His wretched plight, and tenderness innate 596
Moves his great soul. Soon at his high command
Rebuk'd, the disappointed, hungry pack
Retire submiss, and grumbling quit their prey.

Great Prince ! from thee what may thy subjects
hope,
So kind, and so beneficent to brutes ? 601

O Mercy, heav'nly born ! Sweet attribute !
Thou great, thou best prerogative of power !
Justice may guard the throne, but join'd with thee,
On rocks of adamant it stands secure, 605
And braves the storm beneath ; soon as thy smiles
Gild the rough deep, the foaming waves subside,
And all the noisy tumult sinks in peace.

END OF THE THIRD BOOK.

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THE
FOURTH BOOK
OF
THE CHASE.



A R G U M E N T.

Of the necessity of destroying some beasts, and preserving others for the use of man. Of breeding of hounds; the season for this business. The choice of the dog, of great moment. Of the litter of whelps. Number to be reared. Of setting them out to their several walks. Care to be taken to prevent their hunting too soon. Of entering the whelps. Of breaking them from running at sheep. Of the diseases of hounds. Of their age. Of madness; two sorts of it described, the dumb, and outrageous madness: its dreadful effects. Burning of the wound recommended as preventing all ill consequences. The infectious hounds to be separated, and fed apart. The vanity of trusting to the many infallible cures for this malady. The dismal effects of the biting of a mad dog, upon man, described. Description of the otter hunting. The conclusion.



THE

C H A S E.

BOOK IV.

WHATSOEVER of earth is form'd, to earth returns
Dissolv'd : the various objects we behold,
Plants, animals, this whole material mass,
Are ever changing, ever new. The soul
Of man alone, that particle divine, 5
Escapes the wreck of worlds when all things fail.
Hence great the distance 'twixt the beasts that perish,

And GOD's bright image, man's immortal race.

The brute creation are his property,

Subservient to his will, and for him made. 10

As hurtful these he kills, as useful those

Preserves ; their sole and arbitrary king.

Should he not kill, as erst the SAMIAN sage

Taught unadvis'd, and INDIAN brachmins now

As vainly preach, the teeming rav'nous brutes 15

Might fill the scanty space of this terrene,

Incumb'ring all the globe : should not his care

Improve his growing stock, their kinds might fail,

Man might once more on roots and acorns feed,

And thro' the deserts range, shiv'ring, forlorn, 20

Quite destitute of ev'ry solace dear,

And ev'ry smiling gaiety of life.

The prudent huntsman, therefore, will supply
With annual large recruits, his broken pack,
And propagate their kind. As from the root 25
Fresh scions still spring forth, and daily yield
New blooming honours to the parent tree.
Far shall his pack be fam'd, far sought his breed,
And princes at their tables feast those hounds
His hand presents, an acceptable boon. 30

Ere yet the sun thro' the bright Ram has urg'd
His steepy course, or mother Earth unbound
Her frozen bosom to the Western gale :
When feather'd troops, their social leagues dissolv'd,
Select their mates, and on the leafless elm 35
The noisy rook builds high her wicker nest ;
Mark well the wanton females of thy pack,

That curl their taper tails, and frisking court
Their piebald mates enamour'd ; their red eyes
Flash fires impure ; nor rest, nor food they take,
Goaded by furious love. In sep'rate cells 41
Confine them now, lest bloody civil wars
Annoy thy peaceful state. If left at large,
The growling rivals in dread battle join,
And rude encounter. On SCAMANDER's streams
Heroes of old with far less fury fought, 46
For the bright SPARTAN dame, their valour's prize.
Mangled and torn thy fav'rite hounds shall lie,
Stretch'd on the ground ; thy kennel shall appear
A field of blood : like some unhappy town 50
In civil broils confus'd, while Discord shakes
Her bloody scourge aloft, fierce parties rage,
Staining their impious hands in mutual death.

And still the best belov'd and bravest fall :

Such are the dire effects of lawless love.

55

Huntsman ! these ills by timely prudent care

Prevent : for ev'ry longing dame select

Some happy paramour ; to him alone

In leagues connubial join. Consider well

His lineage ; what his fathers did of old,

60

Chiefs of the pack, and first to climb the rock,

Or plunge into the deep, or thread the brake

With thorns sharp-pointed,plash'd, and briars

inwoven.

Observe with care his shape, sort, colour, size.

Nor will sagacious huntsmen less regard

65

His inward habits : the vain babbler shun,

Ever loquacious, ever in the wrong.

His foolish offspring shall offend thy ears
With false alarms, and loud impertinence.

Nor less the shifting cur avoid, that breaks 70

Illusive from the pack ; to the next hedge

Devious he strays, there ev'ry muse he tries :

If haply then he cross the steaming scent,

Away he flies vain-glorious, and exults

As of the pack supreme, and in his speed 75

And strength unrivall'd. Lo ! cast far behind

His vex'd associates pant, and lab'ring strain

To climb the steep ascent. Soon as they reach

Th' insulting boaster, his false courage fails,

Behind he lags, doom'd to the fatal noose, 80

His master's hate, and scorn of all the field.

What can from such be hop'd, but a base brood

Of coward curs, a frantic, vagrant race ?

When now the third revolving moon appears,
With sharpen'd horns, above th' horizon's brink,
Without LUCINA's aid, expect thy hopes 86
Are amply crown'd ; short pangs produce to light
The smoking litter, crawling, helpless, blind,
Nature their guide, they seek the pouting teat 89
That plenteous streams. Soon as the tender dam
Has form'd them with her tongue, with pleasure view
The marks of their renown'd progenitors,
Sure pledge of triumphs yet to come. All these
Select with joy ; but to the merc'less flood
Expose the dwindling refuse, nor o'erload 95
Th' indulgent mother. If thy heart relent,
Unwilling to destroy, a nurse provide,
And to the foster-parent give the care
Of thy superfluous brood ; she'll cherish kind

The alien offspring ; pleas'd thou shalt behold
Her tenderness, and hospitable love.

101

If frolic now, and playful, they desert
Their gloomy cell, and on the verdant turf
With nerves improv'd, pursue the mimic chase,
Coursing around, unto thy choicest friends 105
Commit thy valu'd prize ; the rustic dames
Shall at thy kennel wait, and in their laps
Receive thy growing hopes, with many a kiss
Carefs, and dignify their little charge
With some great title, and resounding name 110
Of high import. But cautious here observe
To check their youthful ardor, nor permit
The inexperienc'd younker, immature,
Alone to range the woods, or haunt the brakes



Engraved by T. Cookard R.A.

Engraved by J. Parker.

*Care & dignify their little Charge
With some great Title?*

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Where dodging conies sport ; his nerves unstrung,
And strength unequal, the laborious chase 116
Shall stint his growth, and his rash forward youth
Contract such vicious habits as thy care,
And late correction, never shall reclaim.

When to full strength arriv'd, mature and bold,
Conduct them to the field ; not all at once, 121
But as thy cooler prudence shall direct,
Select a few, and form them by degrees
To stricter discipline. With these comfort
The stanch and steady sages of thy pack, 125
By long experience vers'd in all the wiles,
And subtle doublings of the various chase.
Easy the lesson of the youthful train,
When instinct prompts, and when example guides.

If the too forward younker at the head 130
Press boldly on, in wanton sportive mood,
Correct his haste, and let him feel abash'd
The ruling whip. But if he stoop behind
In wary modest guise, to his own nose
Confiding sure, give him full scope to work 135
His winding way, and with thy voice applaud
His patience, and his care ; soon shalt thou view
The hopeful pupil leader of his tribe,
And all the list'ning pack attend his call.

Oft lead them forth where wanton lambkins play,
And bleating dams with jealous eyes observe 141
Their tender care. If at the crowding flock
He bay presumptuous, or with eager haste
Pursue them scatter'd o'er the verdant plain ;

In the foul fact attach'd, to the strong ram 145

Tie fast the rash offender. See ! at first

His horn'd companion, fearful, and amaz'd,

Shall drag him trembling o'er the rugged ground :

Then with his load fatigued, shall turn a-head,

And with his curl'd hard front incessant peal 150

The panting wretch ; till breathless and astunn'd,

Stretch'd on the turf he lie. Then spare not thou

The twining whip, but ply his bleeding sides

Lash after lash, and with thy threat'ning voice,

Harsh-echoing from the hills, inculcate loud 155

His vile offence. Sooner shall trembling doves

Escap'd the hawk's sharp talons, in mid air,

Affail their dang'rous foe, than he once more

Disturb the peaceful flocks. In tender age

Thus youth is train'd ; as curious artists bend 160

The taper, pliant twig ; or potters form
Their soft and ductile clay to various shapes.

Nor is 't enough to breed ; but to preserve
Must be the huntsman's care. The stanch old hounds,
Guides of thy pack, tho' but in number few, 165

Are yet of great account ; shall oft untie
The Gordian knot, when reason at a stand
Puzzling is lost, and all thy art is vain.

O'er clogging fallows, o'er dry plaster'd roads, 169
O'er floated meads, o'er plains with flocks distain'd
Rank-scenting, these must lead the dubious way.

As party-chiefs in senates who preside,
With pleaded reason and with well-turn'd speech
Conduct the staring multitude ; so these
Direct the pack, who with joint cry approve, 175
And loudly boast discov'ries not their own.

Unnumber'd accidents, and various ills,
Attend thy pack, hang hov'ring o'er their heads,
And point the way that leads to Death's dark cave.

Short is their span ; few at the date arrive
Of ancient ARGUS in old HOMER'S song 180

So highly honour'd : kind, fagacious brute !

Not ev'n MINERVA's wisdom could conceal
Thy much lov'd master from thy nicer sense.
Dying, his lord he own'd, view'd him all o'er
With eager eyes, then clos'd those eyes, well pleas'd.

Of lesser ills the Muse declines to sing, 186

Nor stoops so low ; of these each groom can tell
The proper remedy. But oh ! what care !

What prudence can prevent madness, the worst
Of maladies ? Terrific pest ! that blasts 190

The huntsman's hopes, and desolation spreads
Thro' all th' unpeopled kennel unrestrain'd.

More fatal than th' envenom'd viper's bite ;

Or that APULIAN spider's pois'nous sting,

Heal'd by the pleasing antidote of sounds.

195

When SIRIUS reigns, and the sun's parching beams

Bake the dry gaping surface, visit thou

Each ev'n and morn, with quick observant eye,

Thy panting pack. If in dark sullen mood,

The glouting hound refuse his wonted meal, 200

Retiring to some close, obscure retreat,

Gloomy, disconsolate : with speed remove

The poor infectious wretch, and in strong chains

Bind him suspected. Thus that dire disease 204

Which art can't cure, wise caution may prevent.

But this neglected, soon expect a change,
A dismal change, confusion, frenzy, death.
Or in some dark recess the senseless brute
Sits sadly pining : deep melancholy,
And black despair, upon his clouded brow 210
Hang low'ring ; from his half-op'ning jaws
The clammy venom, and infectious froth,
Distilling fall ; and from his lungs inflam'd,
Malignant vapours taint the ambient air,
Breathing perdition : his dim eyes are glaz'd, 215
He droops his penfive head, his trembling limbs
No more support his weight ; abject he lies,
Dumb, spiritless, benumb'd ; till death at last
Gracious attends, and kindly brings relief.

4

Or if outrageous grown, behold, alas ! 220
A yet more dreadful scene ; his glaring eyes

Redden with fury, like some angry boar
Churning he foams ; and on his back erect
His pointed bristles rise ; his tail incurv'd 224
He drops, and with harsh broken howlings rends
The poison-tainted air, with rough hoarse voice
Incessant bays ; and snuffs th' infectious breeze :
This way and that he stares aghast, and starts
At his own shade ; jealous, as if he deem'd 229
The world his foes. If haply tow'r'd the stream
He cast his roving eye, cold horror chills
His soul ; averse he flies, trembling, appall'd.
Now frantic to the kennel's utmost verge
Raving he runs, and deals destruction round.
The pack fly diverse ; for whate'er he meets 235
Vengeful he bites, and ev'ry bite is death.

If now perchance thro' the weak fence escap'd,
Far up the wind he roves, with open mouth
Inhales the cooling breeze, nor man, nor beast
He spares, implacable. The hunter-horse, 240
Once kind associate of his sylvan toils,
(Who haply now without the kennel's mound
Crops the rank mead, and lift'ning hears with joy
The cheering cry, that morn and eve salutes
His raptur'd sense) a wretched victim falls. 245
Unhappy quadruped ! no more, alas !
Shall thy fond master with his voice applaud
Thy gentleness, thy speed ; or with his hand
Stroke thy soft dappled sides, as he each day 249
Visits thy stall, well pleas'd ; no more shalt thou
With sprightly neighings, to the winding horn,
And the loud op'ning pack in concert join'd,

Glad his proud heart. For oh ! the secret wound
Rankling inflames, he bites the ground and dies.

Hence to the village with pernicious haste 255

Baleful he bends his course : the village flies
Alarm'd ; the tender mother in her arms
Hugs close the trembling babe ; the doors are barr'd,
And flying curs by native instinct taught,
Shun the contagious bane ; the rustic bands 260
Hurry to arms, the rude militia seize
Whate'er at hand they find ; clubs, forks, or guns
From ev'ry quarter charge the furious foe,
In wild disorder, and uncouth array :
Till now with wounds on wounds oppres'd and gor'd,
At one short pois'nous gasp he breathes his last. 265

Hence to the kennel, Muse, return, and view
With heavy heart that hospital of woe ;
Where Horror stalks at large ; infatiate Death
Sits growling o'er his prey : each hour presents
A diff'rent scene of ruin and distres. 271

How busy art thou, Fate ! and how severe
Thy pointed wrath ! the dying and the dead
Promiscuous lie ; o'er these the living fight
In one eternal broil ; not conscious why, 275
Nor yet with whom. So drunkards in their cups,
Spare not their friends, while senseless squabble reigns.

Huntsman ! it much behoves thee to avoid
The perilous debate ! Ah ! rouse up all
Thy vigilance, and tread the treach'rous ground
With careful step. Thy fires unquench'd preserve,

As erſt the veſtal flame ; the pointed ſteel
In the hot embers hide ; and if ſurpriz'd
Thou feel'ſt the deadly bite, quick urge it home
Into the recent fore, and cauterize 285
The wound ; ſpare not thy flesh, nor dread th' event :
VULCAN ſhall ſave when **ÆSCULAPIUS** fails.

Here, ſhould the knowing Muſe recount the means
To stop this growing plague. And here, alas !
Each hand presents a ſov'reign cure, and boasts
Infallibility, but boasts in vain. 291
On this depend, each to his ſep'rare ſeat
Confine, in fetters bound ; give each his meſſ
Apart, his range in open air ; and then
If deadly ſymptoms to thy grief appear, 295
Devote the wretch, and let him greatly fall,
A gen'rous viſtim for the public weal.

Sing, philosophic Muse, the dire effects
Of this contagious bite on hapless man.

The rustic swains, by long tradition taught 300
Of leeches old, as soon as they perceive
The bite impress'd, to the sea-coasts repair.

Plung'd in the briny flood, th' unhappy youth
Now journeys home secure; but soon shall wish
The seas as yet had cover'd him beneath 305
The foaming surge, full many a fathom deep.

A fate more dismal, and superior ills
Hang o'er his head devoted. When the moon
Closing her monthly round, returns again 309
To glad the night, or when full-orb'd she shines
High in the vault of heav'n, the lurking pest
Begins the dire assault. The pois'nous foam
Thro' the deep wound instill'd with hostile rage,

And all its fiery particles saline,
Invades th' arterial fluid; whose red waves 315
Tempestuous heave, and their cohesion broke,
Fermenting boil; intestine war ensues,
And order to confusion turns embroil'd.

Now the distended vessels scarce contain
The wild uproar, but press each weaker part, 320
Unable to resist: the tender brain
And stomach suffer most; convulsions shake
His trembling nerves, and wand'ring pungent pains
Pinch sore the sleepless wretch; his flutt'ring pulse
Oft intermits; pensive, and sad, he mourns 325
His cruel fate, and to his weeping friends
Laments in vain; to hasty anger prone,
Refents each slight offence, walks with quick step,
And wildly stares; at last with boundless fway

The tyrant frenzy reigns : for as the dog 330

(Whose fatal bite convey'd th' infectious bane)

Raving he foams, and howls, and barks, and bates.

Like agitations in his boiling blood

Present like species to his troubled mind ;

His nature, and his actions all canine.

335

So as (old HOMER sung) th' associates wild

Of wand'ring ITHACUS, by CIRCE's charms

To swine transform'd, ran gruntling thro' the groves.

Dreadful example to a wicked world !

339

See there distress'd he lies ! parch'd up with thirst,

But dares not drink. Till now at last his soul

Trembling escapes, her noisome dungeon leaves,

And to some purer region wings away.

One labour yet remains, celestial Maid !

Another element demands thy song.

345

No more o'er craggy steeps, thro' coverts thick
With pointed thorn, and briars intricate,
Urge on with horn and voice the painful pack :
But skim with wanton wing th' irriguous vale,
Where winding streams amid the flow'ry meads
Perpetual glide along ; and undermine 351
The cavern'd banks, by the tenacious roots
Of hoary willows arch'd ; gloomy retreat
Of the bright scaly kind ; where they at will,
On the green wat'ry reed their pasture graze, 355
Suck the moist soil, or slumber at their ease,
Rock'd by the restless brook, that draws a slope
Its humid train, and laves their dark abodes.
Where rages not oppression ? Where, alas !
Is innocence secure ? Rapine and spoil 360
Haunt ev'n the lowest deeps ; seas have their sharks,
Rivers and ponds inclos'd the rav'rous pike ;

He in his turn becomes a prey ; on him
Th' amphibious otter feasts. Just is his fate 364
Deserv'd ; but tyrants know no bounds ; nor spears
That bristle on his back, defend the perch
From his wide greedy jaws ; nor burnish'd mail
The yellow carp ; nor all his arts can save
Th' insinuating eel, that hides his head
Beneath the slimy mud ; nor yet escapes 370
The crimson-spotted trout, the river's pride,
And beauty of the stream. Without remorse,
This midnight pillager ranging around,
Insatiate swallows all. The owner mourns
Th' unpeopled rivulet, and gladly hears 375
The huntsman's early call, and fees with joy
The jovial crew, that march upon its banks
In gay parade, with bearded lances arm'd.

This subtle spoiler of the beaver kind,
Far off, perhaps, where ancient alders shade 380
The deep still pool ; within some hollow trunk
Contrives his wicker couch : whence he surveys
His long purlieu, lord of the stream, and all
The finny shoals his own. But you, brave youths,
Dispute the felon's claim ; try ev'ry root, 385
And ev'ry reedy bank ; encourage all
The busy-spreading pack, that fearless plunge
Into the flood, and cross the rapid stream.
Bid rocks and caves, and each resounding shore,
Proclaim your bold defiance ; loudly raise 390
Each cheering voice, till distant hills repeat
The triumphs of the vale. On the soft sand
See there his seal impress'd ! and on that bank
Behold the glitt'ring spoils, half-eaten fish, 394

Scales, fins, and bones, the leavings of his feast.

Ah! on that yielding sag-bed, see, once more

His seal I view. O'er yon dank rushy marsh

The fly goose-footed prowler bends his course,

And seeks the distant shallows. Huntsman, bring

Thy eager pack; and trail him to his couch. 400

Hark! the loud peal begins, the clam'rous joy,

The gallant chiding, loads the trembling air.

Ye NAIADS fair, who o'er these floods preside,

Raise up your dripping heads above the wave,

And hear our melody. Th' harmonious notes 405

Float with the stream; and ev'ry winding creek

And hollow rock, that o'er the dimpling flood

Nods pendant, still improve from shore to shore

Our sweet reiterated joys. What shouts! 409

What clamour loud! What gay heart-cheering sounds,

Urge thro' the breathing brass their mazy way!

Nor choirs of Tritons glad with sprightlier strains

The dancing billows; when proud NEPTUNE rides

In triumph o'er the deep. How greedily

They snuff the fishy steam, that to each blade 415

Rank-scenting clings! See! how the morning dews

They sweep, that from their feet besprinkling drop

Dispers'd, and leave a track oblique behind.

Now on firm land they range; then in the flood

They plunge tumultuous; or thro' reedy pools 420

Rustling they work their way: no holt escapes

Their curious search. With quick sensation now

The fuming vapour stings; flutter their hearts,

And joy redoubled bursts from ev'ry mouth 424

In louder symphonies. Yon hollow trunk, 425

That with its hoary head incurv'd salutes

The passing wave, must be the tyrant's fort,

And dread abode. How these impatient climb,

While others at the root incessant bay : 429

They put him down. See, there he dives along !

Th' ascending bubbles mark his gloomy way.

Quick fix the nets, and cut off his retreat

Into the shelt'ring deeps. Ah, there he vents !

The pack lunge headlong, and pretended spears

Menace destruction : while the troubled surge 435

Indignant foams, and all the scaly kind

Affrighted, hide their heads. Wild tumult reigns,

And loud uproar. Ah, there once more he vents !

See, that bold hound has seiz'd him ; down they sink,

Together loft : but soon shall he repent 440

His rash assault. See there escap'd, he flies
Half-drown'd, and clammers up the flipp'ry bank
With ooze and blood distain'd. Of all the brutes,
Whether by Nature form'd, or by long use,
This artful diver best can bear the want 445
Of vital air. Unequal is the fight,
Beneath the whelming element. Yet there
He lives not long ; but respiration needs
At proper intervals. Again he vents ; 449
Again the crowd attack. That spear has pierc'd
His neck ; the crimson waves confess the wound.
Fix'd is the bearded lance, unwelcome guest,
Where'er he flies ; with him it sinks beneath,
With him it mounts ; sure guide to ev'ry foe.
Inly he groans ; nor can his tender wound 455
Bear the cold stream. Lo ! to yon sedgy bank

He creeps disconsolate ; his num'rous foes
Surround him, hounds and men. Pierc'd thro' and thro',
On pointed spears they lift him high in air ;
Wriggling he hangs, and grins, and bites in vain :
Bid the loud horns, in gayly-warbling strains, 461
Proclaim the felon's fate ; he dies, he dies.

Rejoice, ye scaly tribes, and leaping dance
Above the wave, in sign of liberty
Restor'd ; the cruel tyrant is no more. 465
Rejoice secure and bless'd ; did not as yet
Remain, some of your own rapacious kind ;
And man, fierce man, with all his various wiles.

O happy ! if ye knew your happy state,
Ye rangers of the fields ; whom Nature boon 470

Cheers with her smiles, and ev'ry element
Confpires to bless. What, if no heroes frown
From marble pedestals; nor RAPHAEL's works,
Nor TITIAN's lively tints, adorn our walls?

Yet these the meanest of us may behold; 475

And at another's cost may feast at will
Our wond'ring eyes; what can the owner more?
But vain, alas! is wealth, not grac'd with pow'r.

The flow'ry landscape, and the gilded dome,
And vistas op'ning to the wearied eye, 480

Thro' all his wide domain; the planted grove,

The shrubby wilderness, with its gay choir
Of warbling birds, can't lull to soft repose

Th' ambitious wretch, whose discontented soul
Is harrow'd day and night; he mourns, he pines,
Until his prince's favour makes him great. 486

See there he comes, th' exalted idol comes !

The circle's form'd, and all his fawning slaves

Devoutly bow to earth ; from ev'ry mouth

The nauseous flatt'ry flows, which he returns 490

With promises, that die as soon as born.

Vile intercourse ! where virtue has no place.

Frown but the monarch, all his glories fade ;

He mingles with the throng, outcast, undone,

The pageant of a day ; without one friend 495

To sooth his tortur'd mind ; all, all are fled.

For tho' they bask'd in his meridian ray,

The insects vanish, as his beams decline.

Not such our friends ; for here no dark design,

No wicked int'rest bribes the venal heart ; 500

But inclination to our bosom leads,

And weds them there for life; our social cups

Smile, as we smile; open, and unreferv'd.

We speak our inmost souls; good humour, mirth,

Soft complaisance, and wit from malice free, 505

Smooth ev'ry brow, and glow on ev'ry cheek.

O happiness sincere! what wretch would groan

Beneath the galling load of pow'r, or walk

Upon the flipp'ry pavements of the great, 509

Who thus could reign, unenvy'd and secure?

Ye guardian pow'rs who make mankind your care,

Give me to know wise Nature's hidden depths,

Trace each mysterious cause, with judgment read

Th' expanded volume, and submis adore

That great creative Will, who at a word 515

Spoke forth the wond'rous scene. But if my soul
To this gross clay confin'd, flutters on earth
With less ambitious wing, unskill'd to range
From orb to orb, where NEWTON leads the way,
And view with piercing eyes the grand machine,
Worlds above worlds, subservient to His voice,
Who, veil'd in clouded majesty, alone 5²²
Gives light to all ; bids the great system move,
And changeful seasons in their turns advance,
Unmov'd, unchang'd himself : yet this, at least,
Grant me propitious, an inglorious life, 5²⁶
Calm and serene, nor lost in false pursuits
Of wealth or honors ; but enough to raise
My drooping friends, preventing modest Want
That dares not ask. And if to crown my joys, 5³⁰
Ye grant me health, that, ruddy in my cheeks,

Blooms in my life's decline; fields, woods, and
streams,
Each tow'ring hill, each humble vale below,
Shall hear my cheering voice, my hounds shall wake
The lazy morn, and glad th' horizon round. 535



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